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ELEMENTS OF DIVINITY

By THOMAS N. RALSTON, D.D.

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A CONCISE AND COMPREHENSIVE VIEW OF BIBLE THEOLOGY; COMPRISING THE DOCTRINES, EVIDENCES, MORALS, AND INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY; WITH APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS APPENDED TO EACH CHAPTER

EDITED BY
T. O. SUMMERS, D.D.

REVISED, WITH INTRODUCTION

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PREFACE

THE former treatise by the author, styled "Elements of Divinity," related exclusively to the doctrines of Christianity. When that work was published, it was his purpose, at no distant day, to prepare a second volume, embracing the evidences, the morals, and the institutions of Christianity, comprising in the two volumes a complete system of Bible theology. Since the issue of the first volume much of his time and labor have been devoted to such research and investigation as he deemed important to the better accomplishment of his original purpose.

As he progressed in the work, he became convinced that for the perfecting of his plan it would be necessary to revise and enlarge the first volume, not only by further elaborating many portions of it, but by adding thereto eight or ten chapters of new matter.

The first part of the work now offered the public comprises the matter contained in the "Elements of Divinity," in a revised, improved, and more elaborated and systematic form, together with eight or ten chapters entirely new, on topics merely glanced at in the former volume. The second, third, and fourth embrace the evidences, morals, and institutions of Christianity—topics entirely omitted in the former work.

The more natural order in the presentation of the great themes embraced in this work would have required the evidences of Christianity to occupy a position at the commencement. But as the great staple doctrines of Christianity are more important in their nature and less intricate and perplexing to most Christians, as well as more essential to the young minister in the beginning of his labors, it was deemed the better plan, in view of utility, to devote Part I to the doctrines, reserving to Part II the evidences of Christianity.

The object of the author in this work is not the production of a more orthodox, critical, learned, or elaborate treatise on theology than any with which the Church has already been blessed, but one better adapted to popular use in the present day. The theological writings of Stackhouse, Pearson, Dwight, John Dick, George Hill, Richard Watson, and others that might

be named, have been extensively used and are a rich legacy which we trust will never cease to be appreciated by the Church. But while these noble productions are learned and elaborate and are, doubtless, destined to an immortality of fame and usefulness, it must be admitted that there is a felt want of the present day which they do not, they *cannot*, meet.

All good judges have pronounced the "Institutes" of Watson a masterly production, admitting it to be the best presentation and defense of Christian doctrine, in its Evangelico-Arminian type, ever exhibited to the religious public. It is too noble a monument to the genius, theological learning, and logical acumen of that ablest divine of his age for the fear to be entertained that it will ever cease to be appreciated. It will always continue to be read and studied with care by the intelligent lovers of Wesleyan theology, whether ministers or laymen. But it is well known that there is now an important demand of Methodism in this country which "Watson's Institutes" are not calculated to meet. It is impossible that a work written in England, near half a century ago, can be fully adapted to the state of religious controversy in the United States at the present crisis.

Since the great works on theology of which we have made mention were written, the status of theological belief and the base of religious polemics have been materially changed. Calvinism, one system of theological opinion which was so critically examined and so ably refuted in the "Institutes" of Mr. Watson, has undergone, in this country especially, a great modification, both as to the form in which it is set forth and the method in which it is defended by its adherents. To meet this new state of things, a more modern work is needed, and one prepared with an eye to the controversy which has been so rife between Calvinistic divines of the New and Old School type.

Besides, during the last thirty or forty years, not only has great advancement been made in science, but some startling and radical theories, connected with both philosophy and religion, have been zealously paraded. The insidious guise in which some of these heterodox principles are often presented renders them but too imposing to communities not well instructed in theological doctrines. The "Institutes" of Mr. Watson were written without reference or applicability to these

pernicious phases of error and, of course, do not furnish the proper antidote to the evil. In the work now presented, the modern phases of Calvinism, as developed in the United States —the distinctive doctrines of that denomination termed Campbellites, or Reformers—together with the infidel principles of modern German Rationalism, have been specially considered.

The important *desideratum* which it is the object of the author to supply is a textbook of Wesleyan Arminian theology, no less solid, thorough, comprehensive, and critically accurate than any of those referred to, and yet beter adapted to popular use—a work more systematic and concise in form, more simple and perspicuous in style, and less interlarded with antiquated terms and the technicalities of the school men—a work whose striking characteristic shall be theology made easy; which, in style and method, shall not only be pleasing and easy to young persons, private Christians, and theological students, but adapted to ministers of all grades. Such are the characteristics of the work which it has been the author's aim, to the best of his ability, to produce.

While in all the various branches pertaining to mere physical and intellectual science the master minds of the age have gone forth in active and energetic search of improved methods of rendering those studies pleasing and easy, it is remarkable that in theology, the greatest and most important of all sciences, so little effort has been made in this direction. The science of divinity is a sublime system of positive truth and should be set forth in an easy, natural, and connected form; and, like grammar, astronomy, chemistry, or any other science, it should be presented in consecutive chapters; and, for the convenience of study and examination, should have appropriate questions appended to each chapter.

The author takes pleasure in recording his thankfulness to God and to the Church for the encouraging notices and kind reception with which his former work has been favored. In presenting the present more elaborate work, though it has cost him much more labor and research than the former and may possess more intrinsic merit, yet such is the character of some of the topics discussed that he cannot reasonably expect it to receive an equal degree of unqualified approval and commendation. On the doctrines of Christianity there is a remarka-

ble unity of faith among ministers and members throughout all the connections and modifications of Methodism. But in reference to the institutions of Christianity, embracing the government and polity of the Church, there is less harmony of sentiment. Hence, as this subject, in its various and important aspects, is discussed in the work now issued, it is impossible, whatever may be its character, that it should escape criticism, animadversion, or even opposition, from certain quarters.

Leaving an intelligent and indulgent public to decide how far he has succeeded in accomplishing his object as herein specified, he submits this work for their examination, praying that all who may favor it with a perusal may be guided into the knowledge of all saving truth through Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen!

T. N. RALSTON.

INTRODUCTION

A CONTINUED demand for Ralston's "Elements of Divinity" indicates the unusual value of the work and reveals a wholesome desire upon the part of preachers to engage in a serious study of those exalted themes that have exercised the most earnest minds of all generations. While there is an occasional reaction against theology, produced by weariness through excessive speculation and protracted occupation with problems hitherto insoluble, men cannot long desist from the taxing and fascinating consideration of questions pertaining to ultimate reality. The proper study of mankind is God, and the Christian preacher owes it to himself and to his congregation to saturate his mind with the truths of the Bible and to seek the aid of theologians in putting those truths in systematic form. No amount of fervor or practical endeavor can make amends for mental dearth and laziness.

Ralston's volume is a classic in Methodist theology. It occupies a high place among the Arminian works which jarred the Calvinistic theology to its foundations. The author obtained immediate recognition, and soon after its appearance his book was placed in the course of study for undergraduate preachers. It was not his purpose to produce a substitute for Watson's "Institutes," which he regarded as the most valuable and exhaustive treatise that had been written from the Arminian point of view, but rather to treat the subject in popular style and to deal with it in the light of conditions that had arisen in America. While his work is no less systematic and comprehensive than Watson's, it is briefer and less technical, and his somewhat eloquent and imaginative style of writing relieves the tedium of severe reasoning. His departure from the studied plainness of Watson and Wesley is not unpleasing to those who look for literary graces as well as solid material.

A glance through any history of doctrine will show that theology is a progressive science. Ralston found that a half century had brought changes which made it necessary to sup-

plement the great work of Watson with a fresh statement of systematic theology, and the reader of this volume will not be surprised to note that even greater changes have taken place during the half century that has elapsed since it first appeared, and that current theology is further removed in method from the "Elements" than that work was from the "Institutes." "Bible Theology" meant for Ralston the systematic arrangement of the truths of the Bible, established by proof texts taken indiscriminately from Genesis to Revelation without regard to time or setting, while "Biblical Theology" in the terminology of theologians now living means a statement of the religious and moral ideas of the Bible as they appear in the various stages of growth from the earliest times to their final development. This work takes no account of Biblical criticism in the present meaning of the term and contains no trace of the method followed by such scholars as Schultz with the Old Testament and Beyschlag with the New. Investigations in archæology, ancient history, anthropology, geology, and other realms have yielded discoveries that call for modification of various statements and conclusions, and it is only fair to the learned author for the reader to keep in mind the fact that more than half a century has elapsed since the book was written.

However, the age of the book constitutes a part of its value. All good work in any present must be a continuation of the achievements of the past, and no man who is unwilling to acquaint himself with the classic products in theology is capable of making a valuable contribution in that field. Ralston's "Elements of Divinity" will long remain as the chief exponent of the religious thought of one of the most vital periods in the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and he who would understand the present and build for the future will find this book a necessary part of his equipment. Moreover, theology progresses more slowly than other sciences, because it deals with the elemental passions, needs, and qualities of human nature, which changes but little through the ages, and with the invisible realities of the spiritual world, and the eternal God, and that revelation which came to a head in Jesus Christ, "who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Theology, while

progressing from age to age, must forever find its norm of truth in the Holy Scriptures, which it undertakes to systematize and expound.

This excellent body of divinity, which has nobly served a generation, is again sent forth in the confident hope that it will prove no less serviceable to the sons than to the fathers.

GILBERT T. ROWE.

ELEMENTS OF DIVINITY.

PART I.—DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK I.—DOCTRINES RELATING TO GOD

CHAPTER I.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

The term *God* is Anglo-Saxon, and in that language it was used, not only to signify the Supreme Being, but also *good*. By this we learn that, in the apprehension of our ancestors, the Great Supreme was possessed of superlative excellency, so as to warrant the emphatic appellation of *good*.

The Hebrew word in the first chapter of Genesis, translated God, is *Elohim*, a plural noun, which, according to Dr. A. Clarke, the learned have traced to the Arabic root *alaha*, which means to *worship* or *adore*. Hence, it denotes the Supreme Being, the only proper object of religious worship and adoration. The word in Greek is *Theos*, and in Latin *Deus*, which in those languages signify the Supreme Divinity, or Ruler of the universe.

In the Scriptures, numerous expressive terms are used designating the being of God. He is called—

Jehovah—the Self-existent God; *Shaddai*—the Almighty; *Adon*—Supporter, Lord, Judge; *Rachum*—the Merciful Being; *El*—the Strong, or Mighty; *Elohim*—Gods, or Adorable Persons; *Elion*—the Most High; *El-Sabaoth*—God of hosts; *Ehieh*—I am, I will be, Independent; *Chanun*—the Gracious One; *Rab*—the Great or Mighty One; *Chesed*—the Bountiful Being; *Erech-Apayim*—the Long-suffering Being *Emeth*—the True One.

As a brief explanation of our general idea of God, we quote from Bishop Pearson, as follows: "The notion of a Deity doth expressly signify a being or nature of infinite perfection; and the infinite perfection of a nature or being consisteth in this, that it be absolutely and essentially necessary, an actual being of itself; and potential or causative of all beings besides itself, independent from any other, upon which all things else depend, and by which all things else are governed."

In the language of another: "God is a being, and not any kind of being; but a *substance*, which is the foundation of other beings. And not only a substance, but *perfect*. Yet many beings are perfect in their kind, yet limited and finite. But God is absolutely, fully, and every way infinitely perfect; and therefore above spirits, above angels, who are perfect comparatively. God's infinite perfection includes all the attributes, even the most excellent. It excludes all dependency, borrowed existence, composition, corruption, mortality, contingency, ignorance, unrighteousness, weakness, misery, and all imperfections whatever. It includes necessity of being, independency, perfect unity, simplicity, immensity, eternity, immortality; the most perfect life, knowledge, wisdom, integrity, power, glory, bliss—and all these in the highest degree. We cannot pierce into the secrets of this eternal Being. Our reason comprehends but little of him, and when it can proceed no farther, faith comes in, and we believe far more than we can understand; and this our belief is not contrary to reason; but reason itself dictates unto us, that we must believe far more of God than it can inform us of." (Lawson's Theo-Politica.)

It is a remarkable fact, that the Scriptures nowhere attempt to prove the existence of God; nor do they pretend to teach it as a truth before unknown, by declaring in so many words that *God exists;* but everywhere take it for granted, as a matter already understood and believed. From this fact we may justly infer that the *being* of God, in the early ages of the world, was so palpably manifest as to be denied or doubted by none. How this radical and important truth originally became so clearly and forcibly impressed upon man, we need be at no loss to determine, when we reflect on the condition of our first parents, and the intimate relation subsisting between them and their Creator in the garden of paradise.

In philosophy, it is universally admitted that we derive our knowledge of the material and intellectual universe through the mediums of sensation and consciousness; and that the testimony thus presented is of the strongest possible character. That the clear and satisfactory

knowledge of God, possessed by Adam in paradise, was communicated and confirmed by both these sources of testimony, is fully apparent from the Mosaic history. Man was made "in the image, and after the likeness, of God." Consequently, he was capable of immediate intercourse and intimate communion with his Creator. Thus we learn that he "walked and talked with God." He had familiar access to the divine presence, and, at the same time, must have felt within his pure and unfallen soul a deep consciousness of the divine existence and perfections. Thus it may be seen that his knowledge of God was so direct and forcible, that he could no more doubt upon this subject than he could question his own existence.

That a matter so interesting and important as a knowledge of the existence and character of God, should be carefully communicated from father to son, through the successive generations from Adam to Noah, is reasonable to infer. But for the better security of this important object, and that the stream of religious truth, which we have thus seen breaking forth at the fountain, might neither become entirely wasted, nor too much contaminated with error, tributary accessions were, no doubt, derived from the divine communications with Enoch and Noah; so that, after the ungodly race had been swept away by the general deluge, and the ark rested upon Mount Ararat, the patriarch and his family could come forth once more to stand upon the earth, and erect an altar to the true and living God. And thus, from this family, we readily see how the light of tradition might accompany the dispersed tribes, in their devious and extensive wanderings, affording them, at least, a faint glimmering ray of truth, and redeeming them from that gross and stupid ignorance which otherwise might have shrouded in impenetrable darkness every idea of a superior and superintending Power.

That "the world by wisdom knew not God," is a Scripture truth, and whether mere human reason, independent of revelation, could ever have originated the *idea*, much less ascertained the *character*, of God, may well be doubted. The wisest of the heathen philosophers have confessed their indebtedness to tradition for their most sublime and important doctrines upon this subject. The most flattering theories of men, with regard to the boasted achievements of human reason, in reference to this matter, must be admitted to be founded upon mere hypothesis and conjecture. No philosopher, in any age, has ever pretended to have acquired his first idea of a God by a process of rational investigation; but in every instance where a course of reasoning has been instituted in favor of the being of God, it has been

not to arrive at the knowledge of the fact, as an original truth, but merely to corroborate and confirm a truth previously known and acknowledged.

Could we suppose man to be placed in a situation so wholly destitute of the light of revelation, either from tradition or any other source, as to have no idea of God, it is difficult to conceive how he could ever engage in a course of reasoning to demonstrate the existence of that of which, as yet, he had no *idea*. Indeed, the clear probability seems to us to be, that thus circumstanced, he would grope upon the earth in the thickest darkness, without advancing a single step toward gaining a knowledge of the being or character of his Creator, till he would lie down in death like "the beasts which perish." Yet it is clear from the Scriptures that, situated as we are, encircled by the light of revelation in its full blaze, or even as the pagan nations generally are, only favored with the dim light of tradition, we may all look up "through nature's works to nature's God;" and by the exercise of our reasoning faculties, discover in the world around us a numerous array of weighty arguments in favor of the existence of the Deity.

Arguments in proof of the *being* of God may be derived from the following sources:

I. *From the testimony of the nations of the earth.*

II. *From the testimony of the works of nature.*

III. *From the testimony of revelation.*

I. We argue from the testimony of *the nations of the earth.*

It is a fact well known, and very generally acknowledged, that there is scarce a single nation or people known to the enlightened world, either in the present or any former age, entirely destitute of the knowledge of a great Supreme Ruler of the universe. "No age so distant, no country so remote, no people so barbarous, but gives a sufficient testimony of this truth. When the Roman eagle flew over most parts of the habitable world, they met with atheism nowhere, but rather by their miscellany deities at Rome, which grew together with their victories, they showed no nation was without its God. And since the later art of navigation, improved, hath discovered another part of the world, with which no former commerce hath been known, although the customs of the people be much different, and their manner of religion hold small correspondency with any in these parts of the world professed, yet in this all agree that some religious observances they retain, and a Divinity they acknowledge." (Pearson on the Creed.)

How, we ask, did this knowledge originate? We see nations the most diverse from each other in their history and character, their man-

ners and customs, separated by mountains and oceans, by burning sands or drifting snows, and holding no intercourse with each other for ages, all testifying with united voice their belief in a great superintending Power. How can this harmony of sentiment be accounted for? It is true, we see much diversity in the number and character of the divinities adored throughout the heathen world. Some may maintain but one great Supreme, while others swell the number of their gods to thousands, partitioning out the dominion of the universe among the different members of a numerous family, generally allowing to some one, whether "Jehovah, Jove, or Lord," a superiority over all the others. Yet, in all this huge mass of inconsistency, contradiction, and absurdity, as seen in pagan mythology and idolatrous worship, there is a harmony in one point: they all agree that a divinity or divinities preside over the universe.

To object to the argument from this source, on account of the errors of paganism, would be as unreasonable as to deny the existence of a true coin, from the fact that it had been extensively counterfeited. The number of counterfeits would only be a proof that a genuine coin existed; otherwise, how could it have been counterfeited? The number of the false gods in the world presents a presumptive argument in favor of the existence of a true God; otherwise, how can we account for the general prevalence of idolatry? The only rational solution upon this subject is a reference to tradition, and an admission that all nations originally had a common origin; and, previously to their dispersion, were possessed of a system of religious doctrine and worship, which, in their long-continued and extensive wanderings, they have never entirely forgotten. But then we shall still be at a loss to account for the origin of the tradition. Whence originally came this religious knowledge? —this idea of a God—of a superior and superintending Providence? Admit that God originally made a revelation of himself to man, and the problem is at once solved. But deny this, and we may wander in uncertainty and conjecture forever. Thus we may gather from the testimony furnished by the nations of the earth at large, a strong presumptive argument in proof of the existence of God.

II. The second source of argument upon this subject is, *the works of God, as seen in nature around us.*

From this source human reason may deduce an argument which may defy the assaults of skepticism and sophistry. Infidelity, it is true, has long made her boast of reason, and scoffed at religion as a thing only suitable for the sickly enthusiast, or the narrow-minded bigot. To such vain boasters we reply, in the words of Dr. Young—

"Wrong not the Christian, think not reason yours:
'T is reason our great Master holds so dear;
'T is reason's injured rights his wrath resents;
To save lost reason's life he poured his own.
Believe, and show the reason of a man;
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God."

Although many truths of revelation are too profound for human wisdom to fathom, yet nothing contained in that inspired volume is repugnant to the principles of sound philosophy and correct reason. In no department of theological science have the powers of human reason been more intensely engaged than in the demonstration of the existence of God. This subject has extensively employed many of the most acute divines; and so satisfactory have been their arguments, that he who can examine the one-thousandth part which has been written upon this subject by the master-spirits for a century or two past, and dare to call himself an atheist, may justly be considered as much beyond the influence of reason as a stock or a stone.

Inspiration has declared, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." And surely, to open our eyes upon the material world around us, and then to deny that it is the product of a great designing Cause, evinces the height of folly and stupidity. We cannot doubt either our own existence or that of the world around us. We may ask, Whence came we? If we trace our ancestry back for a vast number of generations, we may still inquire, Whence came the first of our species? Again, look forth upon the immense universe. Whence those mighty orbs which roll in solemn grandeur? Whence this earth; its oceans, and its continents; its teeming millions of sentient and intelligent beings? Every effect must have an adequate cause, and can so stupendous a work exist *uncaused?* Could worlds and systems of worlds have sprung up of themselves?

The poet has said:

"Of God above, or man below,
What can we reason, but from what we know?"

1. We know that we exist, and that the universe around us exists. From this we conclude that something must be *eternal.* "Had there e'er been nought, nought still had been." If there be nothing supposed to be eternal, then every thing in existence must once have commenced that existence. And if so, the cause of its existence must either be itself or something extrinsic to itself. If it caused itself to begin to exist, then it must have existed before it was, and been prior to itself.

which is absurd. But if it was caused to exist by something extrinsic to itself, then that extrinsic something must have existed before it did exist, and in such sense as to exert a power sufficient to produce other things, which is also absurd. Hence, as something now exists, it irresistibly follows that something did *eternally* exist.

2. That which eternally existed must be a *self-existent* being—that is, no other being could have caused it to begin to exist; for, as yet, no other being could have been in existence; and to suppose that one being could cause another to begin to exist before it had any existence itself, as already shown, is absurd.

3. That *eternal* and *self-existent* being must also have existed *independently;* for that which existed prior to, and uncaused by, every thing else, as it was not dependent on any thing else for the commencement of its being, so neither can it be for its continuance in being.

4. That *eternal, self-existent,* and *independent* being, must also exist *necessarily.* For if it has eternally existed, without having been caused to begin to exist, either by itself or any thing else, then it follows that its existence depends solely on the eternal necessity of its own nature, so that it is impossible that it ever should not have been, or that it ever should cease to be.

5. That *eternal, self-existent, independent,* and *necessary* being, must also be *self-active*—that is, capable of acting so as to produce other things, without being acted upon by any other being. As we have already proved that there must be something eternal, in order to account for the being of those things which we know do exist, it follows, also, that that eternal being must be capable of acting, or putting forth energy, so as to produce other things; otherwise, no other thing ever could have commenced existence.

6. That *eternal, self-existent, independent, necessary,* and *self-active* being, whose existence we have already proved, must be possessed not only of *power* sufficient to produce all things else, but also of *intelligence, wisdom,* and every other perfection necessary for the creation, preservation, and government of the universe.

For, to suppose something eternal, as the originating cause of the existence of all other things, yet, to admit that the eternal being supposed is not self-possessed of every attribute, quality, or perfection, requisite for the contrivance and production of all originated existences, would be as far from giving a satisfactary account for the origin of things, as if we were to deny that any thing did exist from eternity. To admit the eternal existence of a cause, and yet to deny that it is an adequate cause for the production of the effect in question, is no better

than to deny the existence of any cause whatever. Hence we must admit that there exists an *eternal, self-existent, independent, self-active, intelligent* Being, who, by his own unoriginated powers, arose in his majesty, and created all things.

We have, therefore, only to open our eyes upon the grandeur, harmony, order, beauty, and perfection of the works of God around us, and we see everywhere the demonstrations of the divine existence. This point is most beautifully illustrated by the inspired author of the nineteenth Psalm: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard," etc. Mr. Addison's paraphrase upon this Psalm is familiar to every one: "The spacious firmament on high," etc. This is not only one of the most beautiful poetic effusions in the English language, but a masterly argument—presenting, in its strongest light, and in few words, the entire confirmatory testimony of nature, uttering with her ten thousand tongues, "The hand that made us is divine."

The beauty, harmony, regularity, and order, in nature's works, attest the divinity of their origin. Behold the beautiful adaptation of all things to each other; the harmonious revolutions of the mighty spheres; the skill and wisdom displayed in the constitutions of all organized beings; consider well the mechanism of thy own frame; see how "fearfully and wonderfully thou art made;" think of the mysterious union between this house of clay and its immortal tenant, and doubt, if thou canst, the being of a God.

> "O! lives there, heaven, beneath thy dread expanse,
> One hopeless, dark idolater of chance?"

The argument for the being of a God from the works of nature, opens to our view an extensive and interesting field. So that, whether we contemplate the land or water, the surrounding elements or revolving seasons, we behold everywhere the deep impress of the Deity; and, kindling with the flame of pure devotion, our hearts should beat in harmony with the enraptured bard—

> "Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
> Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven
> Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
> Clothe you with rainbows? Who with living flowers,
> Of lovelier hue, spread garlands at your feet?
> God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations
> Answer, and let the ice-plains echo, God!

God! sing, ye meadow-streams, with gladsome voice,
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sound!
And they, too, have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!"

III. In the third and last place, *revelation*, with all the force of its authority, declares the being and character of God.

It is true, that the force of the evidence from this source will only be admitted by such as acknowledge the truth of revelation. But to such as are not prepared to reject, as an imposture, the record of Holy Writ, the sacred pages furnish the clearest and most impressive demonstrations on this subject. The book of Genesis opens with this sublime announcement: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." From the commencement to the conclusion of the sacred volume, through the successive dispensations, by "signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost," the clearest possible evidence has been given to exhibit the being of God, and proclaim his dominion over heaven and earth. Thus we may see that although the Bible nowhere, in express words, professes to teach that there is a God, yet its testimony in confirmation of the truth of that position is impressive and irresistible. In the sacred history we see the elements obedient to his word. "The winds and the sea obey him;" the earth trembles; and the dead come forth to life, as demonstrations of the being and power of Him who made them all.

Thus, while the Bible does not formally affirm the existence of God, yet it teaches that existence in the most forcible manner. In proclaiming that God created the shining heavens above us—the sun, moon, and stars, that mirror the wisdom, power, and glory of their Author; nature, in its illimitable range of beauty, harmony, and utility; existence, in its endless diversity, and its boundless extent—in proclaiming all these grand and mysterious entities, as the workmanship of God's hand, has not the Bible, in the most emphatic form, demonstrated the *being* of the great and unoriginated First Cause of all that is?

How can "the heavens declare the glory of God," and not at the same time demonstrate his existence? If nature, in all its works, proclaims the *being* of God, so does the Bible, in every page on which his stupendous doings are recorded. If, in looking forth on nature, we read on every leaf and every cloud, on every mote and every globe, "The hand that made us is divine;" so, in perusing the sacred page, we trace, in every record of creation, in every event of divine providence, in every interposition of divine power, and in every dispensation of divine grace and mercy, the strongest possible demonstration

of the existence of the great I Am—the God who was "before all things," and by whom "all things consist."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER I.

QUESTION 1. What was the import of the term *God* with the Anglo-Saxons?
2. What is the Hebrew word rendered *God* in the first chapter of Genesis?
3. What was its root in the Arabic, and what did it imply?
4. What are the words for *God* in Greek and Latin, and what do they imply?
5. By what other names is God called in Scripture?
6. What is embraced in our general idea of God?
7. Do the Scriptures professedly teach that there is a God?
8. Was man originally fully impressed with the being of God?
9. By what means?
10. How was this knowledge secured to Noah?
11. How may it have extended, in some degree, to all nations?
12. Has human reason, independent of revelation, ever acquired a knowledge of the being of God?
13. May all nations derive arguments from nature and reason in favor of the existence of God?
14. From what sources may proofs of the divine existence be derived?
15. What is the argument from the testimony of nations?
16. From the testimony of nature?
17. From the testimony of revelation?

CHAPTER II.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

In this chapter, we propose to consider the *Attributes* or *Perfections* of the Divine Being.

God is infinite, but man is finite; hence we may infer, at once, that it is impossible for us thoroughly to comprehend Jehovah. That which comprehends must be greater than that which is comprehended. But God is infinitely superior to all created intelligences; therefore, it is impossible that any should thoroughly comprehend his nature. The incomprehensibility of God was admitted by the heathen philosophers, as is beautifully shown in the history of Simonides. This philosopher being asked by his prince, "What is God?" demanded first a day, then a week, then a month, to consider the subject; but finally left the question unanswered, declaring that "the more he examined the subject, the more he was convinced of its incomprehensibility."

Our imbecility on this subject is forcibly portrayed by Zophar, in the eleventh chapter of the book of Job: "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."

To comprehend the divine essence is impossible. All we can do is, to consider the attributes of God, so far as he has been pleased to reveal them to man. In this sense of the word, it is both our privilege and duty to "acquaint ourselves with him."

By many divines, the attributes of God have been divided into different classes. They have been considered as *absolute* or *relative; positive* or *negative; proper* or *metaphorical; internal* or *external; natural* or *moral; communicable* or *incommunicable;* and a late able and voluminous writer contemplates them in five classes—as *primary, essential, natural, moral,* or *consummate.* But these divisions we consider unnecessary, and most of them of questionable propriety, and more calculated to perplex and mystify than to simplify the subject. Therefore, we shall adopt no classification whatever.

Before we enter particularly into the discussion of the several attributes, we remark, that the divine nature is not to be understood as divided into separate and distinct parts; but all the attributes are to be considered as pertaining fully, and at the same time, to the one undivided essence. Nor are we to suppose that there is any discrepancy between them. By no means. The divine *justice* and *mercy* cannot be opposed to each other; but all the attributes of God are united in the most perfect harmony. "They are called *attributes*, because God *attributes* them to, and affirms them of, himself; *properties*, because we conceive them *proper* to God, and such as can be predicated only of him, so that by them we distinguish him from all other beings; *perfections*, because they are the several representations of that one perfection which is himself; *names* and *terms*, because they express and signify something of his essence; *notions*, because they are so many apprehensions of his being as we conceive of him in our minds." (Lawson's Theo-Politica.)

In the presentation of a list of the divine attributes, it will appear that their number may be increased or diminished, accordingly as we are general or minute in our division; and, after all, we cannot say that we have a perfect knowledge even of their number. For who can tell what properties may belong to the divine nature, of which Heaven has not seen fit to make any revelation to us, and of which we can form no conception? Therefore, all at which we shall aim is, to present a faint outline of the divine perfections, as we find them delineated in the Holy Scriptures. The following are therein clearly portrayed, viz.:

I. *Unity.* II. *Spirituality.* III. *Eternity.* IV. *Omniscience.* V *Wisdom.* VI. *Omnipotence.* VII. *Omnipresence.* VIII. *Immutability* IX. *Holiness.* X. *Truth.* XI. *Justice.* XII. *Goodness.*

I. UNITY. That there is but *one* God, is clearly revealed in the following passages: Isa. xlv. 21, 22: "There is no God else *beside me.* I am God, and there is *none else.*" Deut. vi. 4: "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is *one* Lord;" and iv. 35: "The Lord he is God; there is *none else beside him.*" Ps. lxxxvi. 10: "For thou art great, and doest wondrous things; thou art *God alone.*" 1 Cor. viii. 4: "There is none other God but *one.*" Eph. iv. 6: "*One* God and Father of all." 1 Cor. viii. 6: "But to us there is but *one* God."

The *unity* of God, a doctrine so essential to true worship, is thus distinctly and repeatedly declared. A plurality of gods is the leading error of paganism. When once the vessel is launched forth from the safe moorings of eternal truth, how wildly will she toss upon the sea of error and delusion! Thus, when the heathen nations gave up the unity

of God, how soon did they plunge into the dark gulf of polytheism! "They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Well has the apostle said: "Their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." For surely reason, if not woefully perverted, would say, There can be but *one* Great Supreme.

II. SPIRITUALITY. That the divine essence is purely *spiritual*, is a doctrine clearly revealed. In John iv. 24, it is declared that "God is a Spirit." 2 Cor. iii. 17: "Now the Lord is that Spirit." These passages sufficiently establish the spirituality of the divine essence. But how infinitely does the refined purity of his *spiritual* nature transcend the utmost grasp of finite minds! Who can analyze this *spiritual* essence? But the mystery involved in the *spirituality* of the divine essence can be no argument against the existence of that spiritual essence. We can comprehend matter only in reference to its properties: we know nothing as to its essence. How, then, can we comprehend the spiritual essence of God? We can be more certain of nothing than we are of the fact, that something exists of an essence entirely distinct from matter, and possessing properties totally unlike those of matter. We know as certainly as we can know any thing, that mere matter does not possess intelligence. It can neither think, nor reason, nor feel. It can have no consciousness of happiness or misery, of right or wrong. And yet it is impossible for us to doubt that something does exist possessed of all these powers. We have within ourselves the evidence of this fact, too overwhelming to be doubted. This, then, is what we mean by spirit.

Our Saviour says: "God is a Spirit." However incomprehensible may be the nature of this Spirit, yet it is indisputable that our Lord used the term in contradistinction from matter. Hence, not only reason, but Scripture, disproves the theory of a material Deity. Pantheism and materialism, in all their forms and phases, are alike repugnant to both reason and revelation. In their nature and tendency they are subversive of all religion. The eternal existence of an infinite, personal Spirit, is the only theory of religious belief adapted to the condition of man, as an accountable but dependent moral agent. As certain as it is that matter does not possess in itself thought, and reason, and skill, and the power of self-motion, so sure is it that there exists, as the Author, Creator, and Upholder of all things, a Being whose nature is pure Spirit. The nature of this purely spiritual essence is a theme too wonderful for us. But when we think of the immensity, and

beauty, and grandeur of his works, the vastness and the majesty of his dominion, we can only conceive of him as a pure, unoriginated, and infinite Spirit. Hence, as certain as it is that God exists, so certain is it that *spirituality* is one of his essential attributes.

III. ETERNITY, or duration without beginning or end, is set forth as an attribute of God. Ps. xc. 2: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even *from everlasting to everlasting*, thou art God." Ps. cii. 24-27: 'I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: *thy years are throughout all generations.* Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but *thou shalt endure;* yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and *thy years shall have no end.*" Isa. lvii. 15: "For thus saith the high and lofty *One* that *inhabiteth eternity.*" 1 Tim. vi. 16: "Who only hath *immortality.*" Deut. xxxiii. 27: "The *eternal* God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." 1 Tim. i. 17: "Now unto the King *eternal, immortal,* invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever." Ps. cvi. 48: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel *from everlasting to everlasting.*" Isa. xl. 28: "Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the *everlasting God,* the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?"

The above passages abundantly exhibit the *eternity* of the Deity. In the contemplation of this attribute, we are overwhelmed with the immensity of the subject. Every thing around us, all that we behold, once had a beginning; the earth, the sea, the mountains and hills, yea, the angels themselves, are but of yesterday compared with God. Of him only may it be said, that *he always was.* Let imagination take her boldest sweep into that eternity which *was,* yet she never can reach the period in which God did not exist. Then let her whirl upon her lofty wing, and dart, with the velocity of thought, for millions upon millions of ages, into the immeasurable range of eternity in the future, but she never can reach the period in which God will cease to be. In an emphatic sense, applicable to no creature, may it be said that *God is eternal.*

The voice of reason abundantly corroborates revelation upon this subject. For, had not God existed from all eternity, it would have been impossible for his existence ever to have commenced. There could have been no originating cause; and an effect without a cause is unphilosophical and absurd. If any thing now exists, something must have been *eternal;* but we are assured of the present existence of things, therefore reason irresistibly concludes that *God is eternal.*

IV. Omniscience. This essential attribute is forcibly presented in the following passages:—Heb. iv. 13: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but *all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*" Acts xv. 18: "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." Ps. cxxxix. 1–4: "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, *thou knowest it altogether.*" Ps. cxxxix. 12. "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." 1 Chron. xxviii. 9: "For the Lord *searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.*" Ps. cxlvii. 5: "Great is our Lord, and of great power: *his understanding is infinite.*"

Thus, we perceive clearly that God possesses the attribute of knowledge in the highest possible perfection. With him there can be nothing difficult, nothing mysterious; but all things are alike plain to his understanding and open to his view.

This perfect knowledge is restricted to no particular part of his dominions, but extends alike to heaven, earth, and hell; yea, throughout the illimitable bounds of immensity. Nor may we suppose that it is applied only to things which, according to the judgment of finite capacities, are of consequence and importance. It extends to all things, great and small. The insect, as well as the angel, is perfectly known in all its mysterious organization and minute history.

The infinite knowledge of God not only comprehends every thing, great and small, whether animate or inanimate, material or immaterial, throughout the immensity of space, but also throughout the infinite periods of duration. All things, past and future, are just as clearly seen, and as fully comprehended, by the omniscient God, as the plainest events of the present.

Again: this knowledge is not to be considered as having a *possible* existence in some things, and an *actual* existence in others, accordingly as they may be deemed more or less important, so as to deserve, or not deserve, the divine attention; but, in all cases, it is an *actually existing* knowledge. Indeed, the *power to know*, and *knowledge* itself, are quite distinct things. The former constitutes no part of the attribute of omniscience, but is properly embraced in the attribute of omnipotence. Therefore, to say that God does not actually know all things, but, in reference to some things, only possesses the power to know them, with-

out choosing to exercise that power, would be plainly to deny him the perfection of omniscience.

Again: the knowledge of Deity must be understood perfectly to accord with the things known, not only in reference to their nature, but also in reference to the period of their existence. He sees and knows things as they *are*, whether present, past, or future; and not as they *are not*. Thus, to suppose that he sees and knows past events as future, or future events as past, would be absurd. And it would seem equally absurd to suppose that he sees or knows either past or future events as present when they are not so in fact. It is true that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do"—the past and the future are seen with as much clearness as the present; but to say that they are seen *as present*, when in fact they are *not present*, would imply that God does not see and know things as they really are; and, consequently, that his knowledge is imperfect. The sentiment that "with God there is one *eternal now*," if it be understood to mean only that present, past, and future, are all seen at the same time with equal clearness, is both rational and scriptural; but if it be understood to imply that with Deity, past, present, and future, are all the same, and that duration, with him, is essentially different in itself from what it is with us, and does not flow on in a regular succession of periods, the idea is either unintelligible or absurd.

Once more: the knowledge of God, although it has no influence upon the nature of things, so as to render that *necessary* which would otherwise be *contingent*, yet it sees them as they are; necessary events as necessary, and contingent events as contingent. But in reference to contingent events, we are not to infer any imperfection in the divine prescience. For while God sees that an event, because he has made it contingent, may take place or not, according to the circumstances upon which the contingency turns, yet the divine penetration darts through the maze of contingencies, and knows certainly whether the event will take place or not, and all about the circumstances by which it shall be determined.

Thus we conclude, from Scripture and reason, that the great Creator of all sees the end from the beginning, and possesses knowledge in absolute perfection.

Upon the divine prescience of contingent events, we subjoin the following remarks from Mr. Watson: "The great fallacy in the argument, that the certain prescience of a moral action destroys its contingent nature, lies in supposing that contingency and certainty are the opposites of each other. It is, perhaps, unfortunate that a word which is of

figurative etymology, and which consequently can only have an ideal application to such subjects, should have grown into common use in this discussion, because it is more liable, on that account, to present itself to different minds under different shades of meaning. If, however, the term *contingent*, in this controversy, has any definite meaning at all, as applied to the moral actions of men, it must mean their *freedom*, and stands opposed, not to *certainty*, but to *necessity*. A free action is a voluntary one; and an action which results from the choice of the agent is distinguished from a necessary one in this, that it might not have been, or have been otherwise, according to the self-determining power of the agent. It is with reference to this specific quality of a free action that the term contingency is used—*it might have been otherwise;* in other words, it was not necessitated. Contingency in moral actions is, therefore, their *freedom*, and is opposed, not to *certainty*, but to necessity. The very nature of this controversy fixes this as the precise meaning of the term. The question is not, in point of fact, about the certainty of moral actions; that is, whether they *will* happen or not, but about the nature of them, whether free or constrained, whether they *must* happen or not. Those who advocate this theory care not about the certainty of actions, simply considered; that is, whether they will take place or not: the reason why they object to a certain prescience of moral actions is, that they conclude that such a prescience renders them *necessary*. It is the quality of the action for which they contend, not whether it will happen or not. If contingency meant uncertainty—the sense in which such theorists take it—the dispute would be at an end. But though an uncertain action cannot be foreseen as certain, a free, unnecessitated action may; for there is nothing in the knowledge of the action, in the least, to affect its nature. Simple knowledge is, in no sense, a cause of action, nor can it be conceived to be causal, unconnected with exerted power; for mere knowledge, therefore, an action remains free or necessitated, as the case may be. A necessitated action is not made a voluntary one by its being foreknown; a free action is not made a necessary one. Free actions foreknown will not, therefore, cease to be contingent. But how stands the case as to their certainty? Precisely on the same ground. The certainty of a necessary action, foreknown, does not result from the knowledge of the action, but from the operation of the necessitating cause; and, in like manner, the certainty of a free action does not result from the knowledge of it, which is no cause at all, but from the voluntary cause; that is, the determination of the will. It alters not the case in the least, to say that the voluntary action might have been otherwise. Had it been

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otherwise, the knowledge of it would have been otherwise; but as the will, which gives birth to the action, is not dependent upon the previous knowledge of God, but the knowledge of the action upon foresight of the choice of the will, neither the will nor the act is controlled by the knowledge; and the action, though foreseen, is still free or contingent.

"The foreknowledge of God has, then, no influence upon either the freedom or the certainty of actions, for this plain reason, that it is *knowledge*, and not *influence;* and actions may be certainly foreknown, without their being rendered necessary by that foreknowledge. But here it is said, if the result of an absolute contingency be certainly foreknown, it *can* have no other result, it *cannot* happen otherwise. This is not the true inference. It *will* not happen otherwise; but, I ask, why *can* it not happen otherwise? *Can* is an expression of potentiality; it denotes power or possibility. The objection is, that it is not possible that the action should otherwise happen. But why not? What deprives it of that power? If a necessary action were in question, it could not otherwise happen than as the necessitating cause shall compel; but then that would arise from the necessitating cause solely, and not from prescience of the action, which is not causal. But if the action be free, and it enter into the very nature of a voluntary action to be unconstrained, then it might have happened in a thousand other ways, or not have happened at all: the foreknowledge of it no more affects its nature in this case than in the other. All its potentiality, so to speak, still remains, independent of foreknowledge, which neither adds to its power of happening otherwise, nor diminishes it. But then we are told that the prescience of it, in that case, must be uncertain; not unless any person can prove that the divine prescience is unable to dart through all the workings of the human mind, all its comparison of things in the judgment, all the influences of motives on the affections, all the hesitancies and haltings of the will, to its final choice. '*Such knowledge is too wonderful for us*,' but it is the knowledge of Him who understandeth the thoughts of man afar off." (Watson's Institutes.)

V. Wisdom. In strictness of analysis, the *wisdom* of God is only a modification of his knowledge, and might with propriety be included as a subdivision under the head of *Omniscience.* But as wisdom is so important a phase of knowledge that it is spoken of in Scripture in contradistinction from it, we allow it a separate consideration here. St. Paul evidently distinguishes *wisdom* from *knowledge*, in the following passages:—"O the depth of the riches both of the *wisdom* and *knowledge* of God!" Rom. xi. 33. "For to one is given, by the Spirit, the word of *wisdom;* to another the word of *knowledge*, by the same Spirit."

1 Cor. xii. 8 Hence, as that peculiar aspect of knowledge indicated by the term *wisdom*, is, by the sacred writers, distinguished from knowledge, in its more restricted acceptation, we cannot err in following so authoritative an example.

Dr. Webster has correctly defined wisdom to be, "The right use or exercise of knowledge. The choice of laudable ends, and of the best means to accomplish them."

To show that this attribute is ascribed to God in Scripture, only a few quotations are necessary. "In whom are hid all the treasures of *wisdom* and knowledge." Col. ii. 3. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold *wisdom* of God." Eph. iii. 10. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only *wise* God, be honor and glory forever and ever." 1 Tim. i. 17. "To the only *wise* God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever." Jude 25.

The result of this teaching is, that God possesses, in his own nature, eternal and unchangeable *wisdom*, in the highest conceivable sense; that is, he possesses the attribute of universal, illimitable, perfect, and infinite wisdom.

Nor can this wisdom be understood as in any sense progressive. It is not arrived at by successive mental exercises or efforts, as is the case with finite beings. His wisdom admits of no increase amid the cycles of duration, but exists, as an element of his essence, from eternity. At one intuitive glance, so to speak, it surveys all things, whether possible or actual, in all their qualities, relations, forces, and issues. Nor is it originated or improved by any concatenated process of ratiocination, or comparing of external things; but it is all of himself—the outbirth of his own infinite fullness. It is not to be contemplated as the product of any thing exterior to God, or as the exercise of a divine faculty, but it is the spontaneous outflowing of the divine perfections—it is God himself, shining forth in his own eternal and changeless attributes.

The wisdom of God is seen in all his works and ways; and volumes might be written upon the subject, without a survey of half the field of interest it presents; but we deem it needless to enlarge.

If we look at creation around us, we see everywhere, not only the evidence of infinite skill and wisdom in the structure of things and in the adjustment of their parts and properties, but a wise adaptation of appropriate means to the most benevolent ends. With what consummate skill have the natural forces been arranged and combined for the production of the vegetable supplies of earth, and how admirably are *they* adapted to the wants of man and beast! The properties of the

soils, the aptitudes of seeds, the rain and the sunshine of heaven, and the recurrence of the seasons, all combine to clothe the earth with verdure, and to fill the barns with plenty.

But the richest display of the divine wisdom is seen in redemption's wondrous scheme.

"Here the whole Deity is known,
Nor dares a creature guess,
Which of the glories brighter shone,
The justice or the grace."

The gospel is the greatest manifestation of the divine wisdom ever witnessed by men or angels. This is that sublime "mystery" which St. Paul affirms was "made known" unto him "by revelation." "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men." "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." Here is the "manifold wisdom of God"—the brightest illustration of this resplendent attribute ever unfolded to the view of "the principalities and powers in the heavenly places." Well might the apostle exclaim, after such a contemplation of the divine wisdom, "Unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end!"

VI. Omnipotence. Perhaps no attribute of God is more gloriously exhibited in the Scriptures than this. That the divine power is *infinite*, is clearly seen in the first chapter of Genesis, where the stupendous work of creation is presented. To create something out of nothing, is a work which none but Omnipotence can perform. How wonderful then the power of God, by which, at a word, he called into being, not only this earth with all it contains, but perhaps millions of worlds, and systems of worlds, that now roll in their respective spheres throughout the immensity of space!

In farther tracing the illustrations of this attribute, as contained in the Scriptures, we notice the following passages:—1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12: "Thine, O Lord, is the *greatness, and the power*, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all." Job xxvi. 14: "But the thunder of his power who can understand?" Ps. lxii. 11: "God hath

spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God." Jer. x. 12, 13: "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures." Hab. iii. 3-6: "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand; and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; his ways are everlasting." Gen xxxv. 11: "And God said unto him, I am God Almighty."

Thus we see how clearly the Scriptures exhibit the omnipotence of God. This, as well as all the other attributes, is possessed in the highest possible perfection. And we understand hereby that God is able to do all things which can be effected by omnipotent power. But, at the same time, all the attributes harmonize, and infinite power can never be exercised so as to perform what implies a contradiction in itself, or what is inconsistent with the divine nature; but this implies no imperfection in this attribute, but rather exhibits its superlative excellency.

VII. Omnipresence. The declarations of Scripture, in proof and illustration of this attribute, are at once clear and sublime. Ps. cxxxix. 7, 10: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Prov. xv. 3: "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." Jer. xxiii. 24: "Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." Isa. lxvi. 1: "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool." 2 Chron. vi. 18: "Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have built." Amos ix. 2, 3: "Though they dig into hell, thence shall my hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down. And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I com

mand the serpent, and he shall bite them." Acts xvii. 28: "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." Eph. i. 23: "The fullness of him that filleth all in all."

The foregoing are sufficient to show that God is everywhere present at the same time. As one has expressed it, "His center is everywhere, and his circumference nowhere." This attribute seems, in the very nature of things, to be essential to the divine character; for, without it, we do not see how the infinite power, wisdom, goodness, and other attributes, could be exercised; and perhaps it was their ignorance of the divine ubiquity which first led the heathen nations into the superstitions of polytheism. How incomprehensible is this, as well as all the other attributes of God! *We* can be present at but one place at the same time; nor, so far as we can judge from reason and revelation, can any created intelligence occupy, at the same time, two separate and distinct positions in space. Fallen spirits, holy angels, and "the spirits of just men made perfect," may pass with the velocity of thought from world to world; but we have no evidence that there is any but the *one* omnipresent Being.

VIII. Immutability. That God is possessed of this attribute, is taught in the following texts:—Mal. iii. 6: "For I am the Lord, I *change not.*" James i. 17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is *no variableness*, neither *shadow of turning.*" Ps. cii. 27: "But thou art *the same*, and thy years shall have no end." Heb. i. 12: "But thou art *the same*, and thy years shall not fail."

By the unchangeableness of God, as thus taught, we are to understand that all his attributes continue invariable. What he is now, in his own essential nature, he ever has been, and ever will be. But this does not imply that he may not change his dispensations toward men. Indeed, the unchangeableness of God itself requires that his dealings with his creatures should so vary as to correspond with the condition of different nations and individuals, and of the same nation or individual at different times. Thus he may look with complacency upon the returning sinner, with whom he was offended during his rebellion, while the apostate, who once shared his smiles, is now the object of his holy displeasure.

The immutability of God seems necessarily to result from the perfection of his character. As all his attributes are infinite, it is clear that they cannot be increased in perfection. They could not suffer diminution or deterioration without the destruction of his Godhead; consequently, they must forever continue the same.

IX. Holiness. This attribute is otherwise termed *rectitude*, or *righteousness*. It is the basis of what is considered the *moral* character of God. The scriptures setting forth this perfection of the divine Being are numerous and explicit. Such are the following: "Thou art of *purer* eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity." Hab. i. 13. "Yea, the stars are *not pure* in his sight." Job xxv. 5. "Be ye *holy*, for *I am holy*." 1 Pet. i. 16. "*Holy, holy, holy*, is the Lord of hosts." Isa. vi. 3. "And they rest not day and night, saying, *Holy, holy, holy*, Lord God Almighty." Rev. iv. 8. "Unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou *Holy* One of Israel." Ps. lxxi. 22.

The infinite holiness of God implies the absolute exclusion of every conceivable principle of moral evil, and the possession, in an unlimited degree, of every conceivable principle of moral good. It implies the possession of an unchangeable will and nature, inclining him, in every conceivable case and at all times, to approve, love, and do, that which is right; and to condemn, hate, and abstain from, that which is wrong. In other words, the nature, the will, and all the acts of God, invariably and freely conform to his own inimitable perfections. Absolute holiness inheres in the divine nature, so that God can no more sanction, approve, or look upon, moral evil without abhorrence, than he can cease to be God. God can only will or approve what accords with his own perfections, with his infinite rectitude, and his unswerving righteousness. Hence it is manifest that the principles of moral rectitude are as eternal and immutable as the divine perfections. Indeed, the principles of holiness flow as naturally from the nature of God as the effect from the cause; or, more properly speaking, infinite holiness is God—it is the substratum of all his perfections, and the perfections of God are God. They cannot be taken from him, nor can they pertain to any created entity in the vast universe.

X. Truth. This attribute might be included as a subdivision under the head of holiness. Indeed, it is only one specific form in which holiness is manifested—one phase in which it may be viewed. As truth is a moral good, and falsehood a moral evil; and as holiness embraces all moral good, it necessarily follows that truth, in strictness of speech, is included in the essence of holiness. Indeed, all the divine attributes so perfectly harmonize, and some of them, like kindred drops, so flow into each other, that it is sometimes difficult, either in our forms of thought or of speech, to distinguish one from another.

That God is possessed of the attribute of truth, appears from the following scriptures: God is said to be "abundant in goodness and *truth*." Ex. xxxiv. 6. "The *truth* of the Lord endureth forever." Ps

cxvii. 2. "God is not a man, that he should *lie;* neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Num. xxiii. 19. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that *cannot lie,* promised before the world began." Tit. i. 2. "That by two immutable things, in which it was *impossible for God to lie.*" Heb. vi. 18. "Yea, let God be *true,* but every man a liar." Rom. iii. 4. "Thy word is *true* from the beginning." Ps. cxix. 160. "A God of *truth,* and without iniquity; just and right is he." Deut. xxxii. 4. "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and *truth.*" Ps. xxv. 10. "Thy *truth* reacheth unto the clouds." Ps. cviii. 4. "Which keepeth *truth* forever." Ps. cxlvi. 6.

The truth of God may be viewed either in the sense of *veracity* or of *faithfulness.* In either acceptation, God is a God of truth, in the most absolute sense. He can no more deceive his creatures by uttering falsehood, than he can be deceived himself. Nor can he fail in the fulfillment of his promises. It is true, many of his promises are conditional; and sometimes, when these conditions are not expressed, they are implied. But in every case the promises of God are, "Yea and amen." If we perform the condition, the promise is sure. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," saith our Lord, "but my words shall not pass away."

The purity of the true religion is gloriously exhibited in contrast with the lying vanities of paganism. While, in heathen systems of worship, we see nothing but vanity, deception, and falsehood, we find revealed in the Bible a God whose nature is *truth,* and a system of worship composed of truth, without any mixture of falsehood or error. This attribute harmonizes with all the others; for as God is *pure,* and *just,* and *good,* he can never deceive his creatures, or permit his word to fail.

XI. JUSTICE. That God possesses this attribute in absolute perfection, is seen from the following passages: Ps. lxxxix. 14: "*Justice* and judgment are the habitation of thy throne." Isa. xlv. 21: "There is no God else besides me, a *just* God, and a Saviour: there is none besides me." Zeph. iii. 5: "The *just* Lord is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity." Rom. iii. 26: "That he might be *just,* and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

That God is *just,* appears from the entire history of the divine administration, as presented in the Bible. Indeed, the preservation of the principles of justice untarnished, is essential to the maintenance of the divine government over the intelligent universe. And should short-sighted mortals, in any instance, fancy an apparent failure in the preservation of the divine justice in this world, we may rest assured that

the future judgment "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness," and fully "justify the ways of God to men."

Justice, like truth, is only one form in which the holiness of God is manifested. The divine justice may be viewed as either *legislative* or *judicial.*

Legislative justice prescribes what is right, and prohibits what is wrong; and defines the reward or punishment connected with the one or the other.

Judicial justice relates to the application of law to human conduct. It may be *remunerative*—conferring a proper reward upon the obedient; or *vindictive*—inflicting due punishment upon the disobedient.

It should be remembered, however, that the reward which God confers on the righteous, is not of *debt*, but of *grace.* We are to be rewarded, not *for* our works, but *according to* our works. In this sense the apostle says: "God is not *unrighteous* to forget your work and labor of love." Heb. vi. 10. And our Lord says: "My *reward* is with me to give every man *according as his work shall be.*" Rev. xxii. 12.

In all the divine administration, the principles of strict justice are maintained. It was well spoken by Elihu: "For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways: yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment." Job xxxiv. 11, 12.

The justice of God is administered with *impartiality.* It is true, in the distribution of temporal mercies, there is often great inequality in the allotments of Divine Providence, both as to nations and individuals. But a complete adjustment on this subject is realized by the application of the Saviour's maxim: "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." Luke xii. 48. With God, "there is no respect of persons." Long ago it was said: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" And the awards of the great day shall render a satisfactory response to the interrogatory, in the face of assembled worlds.

XII. Goodness. This attribute, as contradistinguished from holiness, or universal rectitude, signifies *benevolence.* It is an internal, fixed principle of good-will or kindness, delighting in the diffusion of happiness to all intelligent or sentient existences, so far as possible, consistently with the divine perfections. *Benevolence*, *love*, *mercy*, and *long-suffering*, or *forbearance*, are all included in the attribute of *goodness*, either as different modes of expressing the same thing, or as different forms in which the principle is exhibited.

This attribute is taught in the following scriptures: "O give thanks

unto the Lord; for he is *good;* for his *mercy* endureth forever." Ps. cvi. 1. "O taste and see that the Lord is *good.*" Ps. xxxiv. 8. "None is *good,* save one, that is God." Luke xviii. 19. "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, *merciful* and *gracious, long-suffering,* and *abundant in goodness* and truth, keeping *mercy* for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. "For how great is his *goodness.*" Zech. ix. 17. The Lord is called "the God of *love.*" 2 Cor. xiii. 11. And. St John declares that "*God is love.*" 1 John iv. 8.

This is one of the most interesting and endearing perfections of God. It constitutes the very essence of the Deity. All the other attributes, properly understood, harmonize with love. To this principle neither truth, justice, nor holiness can be opposed.

That God *delights* in the happiness of his creatures, is not only taught with great emphasis and fullness in Scripture, but is abundantly manifest in his works and providence. In all nature we behold the clearest proof of the benevolent designs of its Author. Although evil, both natural and moral, exists in the world, we can see no evidence that, in a single instance, it has been produced by the original contrivance of the Creator.

If God be *good,* and *delighteth* in the happiness of his creatures, how came pain and death into the world? This question has often been urged, and its solution has long puzzled the minds and taxed the ingenuity of philosophers and divines. Perhaps a better reply, in so small a compass, is nowhere to be found than that furnished by Mr. Wesley:

"Why is there *sin* in the world? Because man was created in the image of God; because he is not mere matter, a clod of earth, a lump of clay, without sense or understanding, but a spirit like his Creator; a being endued not only with sense and understanding, but also with a will exerting itself in various affections. To crown all the rest, he was endued with liberty, a power of directing his own affections and actions, a capacity of determining himself, or of choosing good and evil. Indeed, had not man been endued with this, all the rest would have been of no use. Had he not been a free as well as an intelligent being, his understanding would have been as incapable of holiness, or any kind of virtue, as a tree or a block of marble. And having this power—a power of choosing good and evil—he chose the latter—he chose evil. Thus 'sin entered into the world.'" (Wesley's Sermons.)

But while we contemplate man as a sinner, ruined by the fall, the

attribute of infinite love is the one which, of all the divine perfections, addresses itself to our nature the most affectingly, the most tenderly. The amazing love of God in redemption, is the strongest appeal that can reach the human soul. When this has lost its force, the last trace of the divine image has been effaced, and all is lost—utter ruin ensues.

The *mercy* of God is the outgoing of his goodness and love, in manifestations of pity and compassion for such as are in distress or affliction, or are exposed to misery or ruin. Goodness and Love look down upon the fallen race, and desire their happiness; Wisdom devises the remedy; Pity lets fall her tear of sympathy; and Mercy comes to the rescue. But while the guilty turn with indifference or scorn from all the offers of grace tendered by the hand of Mercy, Long-suffering waits with enduring patience, reiterates the pleadings of Mercy, crying, "Why will ye die?" till Goodness, and Love, and Pity, and Mercy, and Long-suffering, having all made their appeals only to be rejected and set at naught, join with Justice, and Holiness, and every perfection of God, in pronouncing upon the incorrigible their fearful and irrevocable doom.

Thus we have presented a faint outline of some of the principal attributes of God, as revealed in his word. But after our utmost research, how imperfect is our knowledge of the great Supreme! We can but exclaim: "Lo! these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?"

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER II.

QUESTION 1. Can we comprehend the nature of God?
2. Is it our duty to endeavor to gain a knowledge of the divine character?
3. To what extent should we carry our efforts?
4. How have the attributes of God been classed?
5. Is this classification important?
6. Are any of the divine attributes opposed to each other?
7. Are we assured that we have some knowledge of all the attributes of God?
8. What attributes of God are portrayed in the Scriptures?
9. What is the import, and what are the proofs, of the attribute of unity?
10. Eternity?
11. What scriptures establish the divine omniscience?
12. Does God absolutely and certainly foreknow all things?
13. In what sense is it proper to say that with God there is one *eternal now*?
14. Does the foreknowledge of God render future events *necessary*, which, if not foreknown, would be *contingent*?
15. How is the attribute of wisdom defined, and how is it proved?
16. What is the import, and what are the proofs, of the attribute of omnipotence?
17. Omnipresence?
18. Immutability?
19. Holiness?
20. Truth?
21. Justice?
22. Goodness?
23. Can we thoroughly comprehend these attributes?
24. What attribute is said most fully to define the divine character?

CHAPTER III.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

THE term *Christ* is from the Greek Χριστός, which means *anointed*, coming from the verb χρίω, *to anoint*. It is an appellation now universally appropriated to Jesu of Nazareth, the Saviour of the world, and author of the Christian religion.

That this illustrious personage was possessed of proper *humanity*, having assumed our nature, sin only excepted, is a position clearly set forth in the Scriptures, and very generally admitted. In proof of this doctrine, we might appeal to the entire personal history of our Saviour, as well as to those numerous passages of Scripture in which he is styled *man*, or the *Son of man*.

But the object of this chapter is to treat especially of the *divinity of Christ*, which relates to another nature, entirely distinct from the *humanity*. By the *divinity of Christ* we here mean the *Godhead*, in the proper and supreme sense of the term.

With regard to the character of Christ, three distinct views have been adopted, known as the Socinian, the Arian, and the Trinitarian theories. Socinus taught that the Saviour commenced his existence when he was born of the Virgin, and consequently that he was a mere man, though possessed of extraordinary sanctity and excellence. Arius taught that he was the first and the most exalted being God ever produced, but still, that he was *created*. Whereas, Trinitarians hold that he possesses two distinct natures—the *humanity*, which was born of the Virgin, and crucified on the cross, and the *divinity*, which was united with the humanity, and was very and eternal God, in essence equal and one with the Father.

The plain question which we will now consider is this: *Is Jesus Christ truly and properly God?* The affirmative of the question we believe to be the Scripture truth, and we proceed to establish it by an appeal to the holy oracles.

The scriptural arguments on this subject we deduce from four different sources, viz., I. The *titles;* II. The *attributes;* III. The *works;* and IV. The *honors*, ascribed to Christ. To each of these we will attend in the order here presented.

I. Titles of Christ. These, we think, as presented in the Scriptures, are so exalted that they can properly apply to none but God, and consequently they demonstrate the proper Deity of Christ.

1. *Jehovah.*—If it can be shown that this sacred and exalted name is in the Scriptures applied to Christ, it will amount to an irresistible proof of his real and proper divinity. First, let us notice the superior dignity of the title. As we see, from the third chapter of Exodus, this was the peculiar and appropriate name of God, which was first revealed unto Moses from the bush, and is there rendered in our version, "*I Am that I Am.*" Josephus informs us that this name was so peculiarly sacred and holy, that his religion did not permit him to pronounce it. This word Jehovah has ever been considered by the Jews as the highest appellation of the supreme God; and God himself claims it as his own peculiar name. We shall now see that it is applied to Christ. In Isa. xl. 3, we read as follows: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Here, in the original, is found the word *Jehovah.* Now let us turn to Matt. iii. 3, and we find this passage quoted, and applied to Jesus Christ: "For this is he that was spoken of by the Prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

Again, in 1 Cor. x. 9, we read: "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." Here we have the testimony of the apostle that the person tempted by the fathers in the wilderness was Christ; but let us turn to the passage from which he quotes, and we shall see that he is there called *Jehovah.* Deut. vi. 16: "Ye shall not tempt *the Lord* your *God*, as ye tempted him in Massah." Here the original is, *Jehovah* your God. Thus the same person styled *Jehovah* by Moses, is by St. Paul explicitly said to be *Christ.*

Various other instances might be specified, in which the *Christ* of the New Testament is identified with the *Jehovah* of the Old Testament; but these are so clear that we need not multiply quotations. Now if, as we have seen, Jehovah, which means the self-existent God, the highest title the Almighty ever claimed, is applied to Christ, will it not follow that Christ is God?

2. *Lord of glory.*—1 Cor. ii. 8: "Which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the *Lord of glory.*" Here we see that Jesus Christ is styled the *Lord of glory;* but that appellation is proper to none but God; therefore Jesus Christ must be *God.*

3. *God.*—Jesus Christ in the Scriptures is styled God. John i. 1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the *Word was God.*" Here Jesus Christ is called God; but that term is applicable to none but *God;* therefore Jesus Christ must be *God.* Again, Ps. xlv. 6, 7: "Thy throne, O *God,* is forever and ever; the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter; thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore *God, thy God,* hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Here, in the original, is found the word *Elohim,* or *God;* but now turn to Heb. i. 8, and we see this passage quoted, and applied to Christ, thus: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O *God,* is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom," etc.

Other passages, equally forcible, might be adduced, but these are sufficient to show that Jesus Christ is in the Scriptures called *God;* but this term can be applied to *none but God;* therefore Jesus Christ must be *God.*

Unitarians, to evade the force of this argument, which they cannot but feel to be conclusive, have, most unfortunately for their cause, attempted a change in the translation, so as to make it read, "God is thy throne forever and ever." This translation, instead of calling the Son God, or *Elohim,* is made to say that God, or *Elohim,* is the *throne of the Son.* Hence it would follow that the Son must be superior to God, or *Elohim,* since he who sits upon the throne is superior to the throne itself. Thus, to avoid acknowledging the Deity of Christ, men have been rashly led even to undeify the Father, and hurl their artillery against the eternal throne.

4. *God with us.*—This title is in Scripture applied to Christ. Matt. i. 23: "And they shall call his name *Emmanuel,* which being interpreted is, *God with us.*" Here Jesus Christ is called "God with us;" but that appellation is proper to none but God; therefore Jesus Christ must be God.

5. *God over all.*—In Rom. ix. 5, we read: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is *over all, God* blessed forever." Here our Saviour is styled "God over all;" consequently he must be the supreme God, for none can be greater than that God who is "over all."

6. *God manifest in the flesh.*—The same Being who was manifested in the flesh, or became *incarnate,* is called God. 1 Tim. iii. 16: "Great is the mystery of godliness; *God was manifest in the flesh,*" etc. And in Acts xx. 28, we read: "Feed the Church of *God,* which he hath purchased with his own blood." These passages show that Jesus Christ the incarnate Word, was also *God.*

7. *True God.*—This appellation is in the Scriptures given to Christ. 1 John v. 20: "And we are in him that is true, even in his Son, Jesus Christ; this is the *true God*, and eternal life." John xvii. 3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the *only true God*, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." From these passages we learn that there is but "one true God," and that Jesus Christ is that true God.

8. *Great God.*—In Tit. ii. 13, we read: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the *great God*, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Here, Jesus Christ is styled the "great God;" consequently he must be very and eternal God.

9. *Mighty God.*—In Isa. ix. 6, we read: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, The *Mighty God*, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Here the "son given," and the "child born," which is Christ, is called "The Mighty God;" consequently Christ is very and eternal God.

Thus have we clearly seen from the Scriptures that Jesus Christ is designated by the following titles: *Jehovah, Lord of glory, God, God with us, God over all, God manifest in the flesh, true God, great God*, and *mighty God*. If this be true, then it will follow that if there were any other God besides Jesus Christ, the titles of Christ could not apply to that other God; consequently he could neither be *Jehovah, the Lord of glory, God, God with us, God manifest in the flesh, the true God, the great God*, nor the *mighty God;* which is the same as to say he could not be God at all. Therefore we conclude, from the *titles* ascribed to Christ, that he is truly and properly very and eternal God.

But, strange as it may appear, all this weight of argument, which we conceive to be nothing short of demonstration, is attempted to be set aside by the plea that "men, or created intelligences, are sometimes called *gods* in the Scriptures." To which we reply, that in all places where the term god is applied to created beings, it is in an obviously inferior, accommodated, or figurative sense; and this is plainly seen in the context. For example, in the seventh chapter and first verse of Exodus, where God says to Moses, "See, I have made thee a *god* to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." The figurative sense in which the term *god* is used, is so obvious from the context, that no one can be misled thereby. But in all the titles which we have seen applied to Christ, as clearly demonstrating his proper divinity, there is no inferior or figurative sense to be gathered from the context; but, on the contrary, the terms are used in their proper sense,

with their fullest import, with nothing in the context to authorize a figurative or restricted acceptation. Hence the objection must fall to the ground; and we shall still be compelled to admit that the *titles* applied to Christ, unless inspiration is designed to mislead, do most clearly and conclusively demonstrate his real and proper divinity.

II. ATTRIBUTES. In the second place, the attributes ascribed to Christ in the Scriptures prove that he is *God.*

1. *Eternity.*—In Isa. ix. 6, Christ is called "The *Everlasting* Father;" or, as critics generally render it, "Father of the *everlasting age;*" or, "Father of *eternity.*" Either rendering will sufficiently establish the eternity of Christ. John viii. 58: "Before Abraham was, I am." Again, Rev. i. 17: "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead; and he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the *first and the last.*" And in Rev. xxii. 13, we read: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, *the first* and *the last.*" In Rev. i. 8, we read: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which *is,* and which *was,* and which is *to come,* the Almighty." And immediately after John heard these words, he "turned to see the voice that spake with" him, and saw "one like unto the Son of man." Hence it is clear that all these words were uttered by our Saviour, and they evidently imply the eternity of his nature. But none but God can be eternal; therefore Christ must be God.

2. *Immutability.*—This attribute is ascribed to Christ. In Heb. i. 12, we read in reference to Christ: "But thou art *the same,* and thy years shall not fail." Heb. xiii. 8: "Jesus Christ *the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.*" In these passages, the immutability of Christ is clearly expressed. But none but God can be immutable; therefore Jesus Christ must be God.

3. *Omnipresence.*—In the Scriptures, this attribute is applied to Christ. Matt. xxviii. 20: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, *I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*" It is not possible for this promise to be fulfilled, unless Christ be omnipresent. Matt. xviii. 20: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there *am I* in the midst of them." John iii. 13: "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man *which is in heaven.*" These texts clearly teach the omnipresence of Christ; consequently he must be God.

4. *Omnipotence.*—This attribute is in the Scriptures ascribed to Christ. Matt. xxviii. 18: "And Jesus came and spake unto them,

saying, *All power* is given unto me in heaven and in earth." And in Rev. i. 8, Jesus Christ is called, "*The Almighty.*" Hence the attribute of omnipotence belongs to him; therefore he must be God.

5. *Omniscience.*—This attribute is ascribed to Christ in the following passages:—1 Cor. i. 24: "But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the *wisdom of God.*" Col. ii. 2, 3: "Of Christ, in whom are hid *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*" John xvi. 30: "Now we are sure that thou *knowest all things,* and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God." John xxi. 17: "Lord, thou *knowest all things;* thou knowest that I love thee." John ii. 24, 25: "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he *knew all men,* and needed not that any should testify of man; for he *knew what was in man.*"

The foregoing clearly testify that Christ is omniscient. But none but God can be omniscient; therefore Christ must be God.

From what has been said, it clearly follows, according to the Scriptures, that Christ is *eternal, immutable, omnipresent, omnipotent,* and *omniscient.* Now, it is impossible that any but the Supreme God should be possessed of these perfections; therefore the conclusion is irresistible that Jesus Christ is the supreme and eternal God.

That the above argument from the attributes of Christ may be seen in its full force, it is only necessary to reflect that they are the highest perfections which can possibly pertain to Deity, and without which he would instantly cease to be God. In fact, they enter into the very definition of the character of God; so much so, that no being without them can be God; and any being possessing them must be God.

Those who deny the proper divinity of Christ, have admitted that these attributes are ascribed to him, but allege that "he only possesses them by delegation from the Father." To which we reply that the hypothesis is self-contradictory and absurd. As these attributes are all infinite, if delegated at all, they must be entirely delegated. Hence, if the Father delegated infinite perfection to the Son, he could not have still possessed it himself; for no part of that which is entirely given to another can be left. Hence it would follow that the Father could no longer be God. Indeed, the whole scheme of a delegated God, in the proper sense of that term, is absurd in itself; for there can be but one being possessed of infinite perfections; and these, in their very nature, are not susceptible of transfer.

III. The works ascribed to Christ in the Holy Scriptures, are such as properly belong to none but God, and can be performed by none but

the Great Supreme; consequently they clearly prove that Jesus Christ is very and eternal God.

1. *Creation*, in the proper sense of the word, is ascribed to Christ; but this is a work which none can perform except the great First Cause of all things, who is universally understood to be God; therefore Christ must be God. That Christ is the Creator of all things, is seen from the following passages:—John i. 1–3, 14: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*" "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," etc.

Here we may observe that the same Word, or *Logos*, that was "made flesh," made all things; consequently, if he was a creature, he *made himself*, which would imply an absurdity. Again, in Col. i. 15–17, we read: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him *were all things created*, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; *all things were created by him*, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Upon this passage we may remark, that if, by the eternal God, we understand that being who made all things, then Jesus Christ is the eternal God; for "by him *were all things created*." Again: if, by the eternal God, we understand that being who existed prior to all other beings, then Jesus Christ is the eternal God; for "he is *before all things*." Again if, by the eternal God, we understand that being who sustains all things in being, then Jesus Christ is the eternal God; for "by him *all things consist*." Once more: if, by the eternal God, we understand that being for whom all things were made, then Jesus Christ is the eternal God; for "all things were made by him, and *for him*."

From the passages above quoted, it is plain as language can make it, that the work of creation is ascribed to Jesus Christ. In the first chapter of Genesis, we read: "In the beginning *God created* the heaven and the earth." From the similarity with which the first chapter of John commences, we are well convinced that the apostle had his mind placed on the record of Moses in the first of Genesis, and referred to the same beginning and the same creation. Hence the peculiar force of the argument. The same creation spoken of by Moses in the first of Genesis, and ascribed to God, is spoken of by the apostles in the first of John and the first of Colossians, and ascribed to Christ.

The whole power of this argument some have, however, endeavored to evade, by saying that "Christ performed the work of creation merely

as a *delegated being*, exercising *delegated powers;*" but this is preposterous, because it has nothing in the text to sustain it. Nay, it flatly contradicts the inspired record; for it is said Christ created all things "*for himself;*" whereas, a delegated being acts, not "*for himself,*" but *for him by whom he is delegated.* Thus it is clear that the ascription of the work of creation to Christ establishes his real and proper divinity.

2. *Preservation* is properly a work of the Supreme God, but that this is attributed to Christ in the Scriptures, is seen from the quotation already made from Col. i. 17: "By him *all things consist.*" In Heb. i. 3, we read: "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and *upholding all things by the word of his power.* when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Here we see that the great work of preserving or upholding the universe is directly ascribed to Christ, and that without any intimation that he was exercising only a delegated power; consequently, if preservation be a work proper to none but the Supreme God, Jesus Christ must be that being.

3. *Pardon*, or the forgiveness of sins, is ascribed to Christ. In Matt. ix. 6, we read: "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to *forgive sins*, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." Col. iii. 13: "Even as *Christ forgave* you, so also do ye." Acts v. 31: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and *forgiveness of sins.*" Thus we see that the forgiveness of sins, in his own name and by his own authority, is a work of Christ. But it is a work properly belonging to none but God; therefore Christ must be God.

4. *Miracles.*—These were performed by Christ by his own proper authority. Prophets and apostles have wrought miracles, in the name and by the authority of God, who sent and empowered them; but they always confessed that it was not through their "own power or holiness," but by the power of *God*, that the wonders were performed. But how different were the miracles of Christ! "The winds and the sea obeyed him." The sick were healed, the dead were raised up at a word, and all nature was subject to his godlike control. Not only did he perform the most astonishing miracles himself, by his own authority, and at his own pleasure, but the miracles performed by the apostles were attributed to the potency of the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus it is clear that Christ performed miracles in a higher sense than ever prophet or apostle could claim to do, and in a sense proper to none

but God; consequently the miracles of Christ attest his real and proper divinity.

5. *Judgment.*—The judgment of the world, at the last day, is a work proper to be conducted by God alone; but this also is, in the Scriptures, attributed to Christ, as a work belonging to him. That Christ is to be the judge of the world, appears from the following passages:—Rom. xiv. 10, 11: "For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat *of Christ.* For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." Phil. ii. 9–11: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the *name of Jesus* every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that *Jesus Christ is Lord,* to the glory of God the Father." 2 Tim. iv. 1: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the *Lord Jesus Christ,* who shall *judge the quick and the dead* at his appearing and his kingdom." John v. 22: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed *all judgment unto the Son.*" Matt. xxv. 31, etc.: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him," etc. Thus it is expressly and repeatedly declared that Jesus Christ is to be the *judge* in the great day of accounts. Now, if this be a work proper to God alone, and if it be expressly attributed to Jesus Christ in the Scriptures, it will irresistibly follow that Jesus Christ is God.

That God is to be the judge in the great day of retribution, is abundantly evident from Scripture. In Heb. xii. 23, we read: "To the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to *God the judge of all,* and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Rom. iii. 6: "For then how shall *God judge the world?*" Eccl. xi. 9: "But know thou, that for all these things *God will bring thee into judgment.*"

Thus we discover how expressly it is set forth in Scripture, that it is the work of God *to judge the world at the last day;* and yet we have seen clearly that this work is ascribed to *Christ;* consequently Christ is God.

Thus have we seen that the works of *creation, preservation, the forgiveness of sins, the performance of miracles,* and *the judgment of the world,* are all ascribed to Christ, and that they are works properly belonging to God alone; consequently they demonstrate the true and proper divinity of Christ.

Arians and Socinians, generally, endeavor to evade the force of the argument derived from the *works* attributed to Christ, by asserting that "Christ exercises all this authority, and performs all these stupendous works, merely as a delegated creature." But this is an assumption,

not only unsupported by Scripture, but, as already shown, in direct opposition to the inspired record. That it is also unreasonable and absurd, will be readily perceived, when we reflect for a moment on the nature of these powers, said to be delegated or imparted. For instance, take the first which we presented—creation. Now, to say that Jesus Christ produced the work of creation out of nothing, by the exercise of a delegated power, would necessarily imply that omnipotent or infinite power had been delegated to him; for no power short of that is adequate to the work in question. But if that omnipotent or infinite power was delegated to Christ, then it necessarily follows either that there are two beings of infinite power, and consequently two Gods, or that the Father has ceased to be possessed of omnipotence himself, having transferred this perfection to another, and, consequently, ceased to be God. Take either horn of the dilemma, and it may easily be seen that the notion of delegated creative power leads to manifest absurdity.

IV. Honors. 1. The *divine worship* ascribed to Christ in the Scriptures demonstrates his Supreme Godhead. In Matt. iv. 10, our Saviour says: "For it is written, Thou shalt *worship* the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." And throughout the whole history of the Bible, to pay divine homage or worship to any being except God, is idolatry, a crime of deepest dye.

Now, if it can be shown that Jesus Christ is a proper object of worship, or divine honors, it will necessarily follow that he is very and eternal God. That he is a proper object of divine worship, appears from the following passages: —Luke xxiv. 51, 52: "And it came to pass while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they *worshiped* him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." Acts i. 24: "And they *prayed*, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen." Acts vii. 59, 60: "And they stoned Stephen, *calling upon God*, and saying, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.* And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* And when he had said this, he fell asleep." 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9: "For this thing I *besought the Lord thrice*, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the *power of Christ* may rest upon me." 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17: "Now *our Lord Jesus Christ himself*, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, *comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work.*" 1 Cor. i 2: "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that

are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place *call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord*, both theirs and ours." Heb. i. 6: "And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, *And let all the angels of God worship him.*" Rev. v. 11–13: "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.* And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, *Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power*, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, *and unto the Lamb, forever and ever.*"

Thus do we see that *prayer, praise, homage, devotion*, and the highest species of *worship*, such as can be rendered to no created intelligence without the grossest idolatry, are claimed by, and ascribed to, our blessed Saviour; consequently, he must be the Supreme God. The Bible is expressly designed to destroy every species of idolatry; but if Jesus Christ be not the Supreme Jehovah, the holy volume itself is the best constructed system that could have been devised for the successful encouragement and promotion of idolatry in its grossest form.

2. *Godhead.*—The honors of the Supreme Godhead are emphatically ascribed to Christ. In Heb. i. 3, we read: "Who being the *brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.*" This passage conclusively identifies the natures of Christ and of the Father. To see the force of the passage, it is only necessary to reflect that the glory of the Father, in the absolute and supreme sense of the term, means his supreme perfections. Now, observe, it is not said that Christ *reflects* the glory of the Father, but that he *is* that glory. But lest it might still be supposed that he is only the glory of the Father in an inferior or delegated sense, it is said he is "the *brightness* of his glory;" which implies that he is the glory of the Father in the superlative sense. In Col. i. 15, we read: "Who is the *image* of the invisible God." And in the 19th verse: "For it pleased the Father that in him should *all fullness* dwell.' Again, in Col. ii. 9, we read: "For in him dwelleth *all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*"

Observe here, first, Christ is said to be "the *image* of the invisible God." This must refer to his divine perfections; and Christ cannot be the image of them unless he possesses them entire. Again: it is here said that in Christ "all fullness" dwells. This can have no meaning, unless it implies the infinite perfections of Jehovah. But lest there

might still be room for cavil, it is said, in the third place, that "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the *Godhead bodily.*" Language could not be framed more strongly to express supreme divinity.

3. *Equality with the Father* is an honor claimed by, and attributed to, Christ. Here we may observe that, as God the Father is a being of infinite perfections, no finite being can be equal with him; none can be equal with him without possessing an identity of nature, so as to constitute the same infinite and undivided essence. That this equality is ascribed to Christ, is seen in the following scriptures:—Phil. ii. 6: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be *equal with God.*" John v. 18: "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself *equal with God.*" In verse 23d: "That all men should *honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.*" John x. 33: "The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, *makest thyself God.*" John xiv. 9: "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" Here we see the equality of Christ with the Father clearly presented. He claimed it himself. He "thought it not robbery to be *equal with God.*" The Jews understood him to claim this equality in an absolute sense; for they said, "Thou *makest thyself God.*" If they misunderstood him in this claim, he must have designed to deceive them; for he does not correct the error.

Again, he claims equal honors with the Father. If Jesus Christ be not God, surely this would be gross blasphemy, and the sanction of palpable idolatry!

Thus have we seen that the honors of *divine worship, Supreme Godhead,* and *equality with the Father,* are, in Scripture, plainly ascribed to Christ; consequently he must be very and eternal God.

In conclusion, we would say, that the Divinity of Christ is a doctrine, not only expressly and abundantly taught in the Bible, but perfectly consistent with the general scheme of salvation presented in the gospel. Christ is there exhibited as the great atoning sacrifice for sin, and Redeemer of the world. That he may be an adequate Mediator between God and man, it seems essential that he possess both natures. Were he a mere creature, all the service in his power to render would belong to God, as a matter of debt on his own account; consequently he could have no merit to spare, as an atonement for mankind.

Finally, he is presented as the *Saviour of the world;* as the ground

and foundation of the sinner's hope and confidence, in the hour of affliction, death, and judgment. How essential does it appear that the arm on which we lean for the salvation of our immortal souls should be strong to deliver, and mighty to save! Well might we tremble, if our eternal hopes were all based upon a finite creature! But, thanks be to God, he in whom we trust, as our refuge and Redeemer, possesses infinite perfections. He is the Holy One of Israel, the unoriginated and eternal Jehovah. He possesses those titles and attributes, performs those works and receives those honors, which properly can belong to none but the Great Supreme. To him be glory and dominion forever! Amen.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER III.

QUESTION 1. What is the import of the word *Christ?*
2. How may the real and proper *humanity* of Christ be proved?
3. What is the Socinian theory of Christ?
4. The Arian?
5. The Trinitarian?
6. From what four sources are proofs of Christ's real divinity deduced?
7. What exalted titles are ascribed to Christ?
8. What is the proof that he is styled Jehovah?
9. Lord of glory?
10. God?
11. God with us?
12. God over all?
13. God manifest in the flesh?
14. True God?
15. Great God?
16. Mighty God?
17. How do these titles demonstrate his proper divinity?
18. How is the attempt made to evade the force of the argument? and what is the reply?
19. What attributes are mentioned as being ascribed to Christ?
20. What is the proof that he is eternal?
21. Immutable?
22. Omnipresent?
23. Omnipotent?
24. Omniscient?
25. How do these attributes prove the Deity of Christ?
26. How is the attempt made to evade the force of the argument? and what is the reply?
27. What exalted works are ascribed to Christ?
28. What is the evidence that creation is ascribed to him?
29. Preservation?
30. Pardon?
31. Miracles?
32. Judgment?
33. How do these works prove the proper divinity of Christ?
34. How is the effort made to evade the force of the argument? and what is the reply?
35. What are the exalted honors ascribed to Christ?
36. What is the evidence that divine worship is ascribed to him? and how does it demonstrate his proper divinity?
37. The Supreme Godhead?
38. Equality with the Father?
39. Whence does it appear that the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ accords with the gospel scheme of salvation?

CHAPTER IV.

THE PERSONALITY AND DIVINITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE Holy Spirit is a term of so frequent occurrence in the sacred writings, and presents a theme of contemplation so intimately connected with the entire system of revealed truth, that a careful investigation of the subject must be of vital importance.

The word rendered *Spirit*, in Hebrew, is *ruach*, and in Greek, *pneuma*, which in those languages signify, primarily, *breath*, or *wind*, from the verb signifying *to breathe*, or *to blow*. The etymology of the word, however, can afford us but little aid in the investigation of the subject of the Holy Spirit, as presented in the Bible. Here we must rely entirely upon the declarations of inspiration.

In reference to what we are to understand by the Holy Spirit, as used in the Scriptures, there has existed from the early ages of Christianity, among professed Christians, a diversity of sentiment. Some have understood thereby merely an *attribute*, *energy*, or *operation*, of the Divine Being, denying to the Holy Ghost any personal existence whatever; whilst others have contended both for the personal existence and the real Deity of the Holy Spirit. The former has been the sentiment generally of Arians, Socinians, Unitarians, etc. The latter has been the creed of the great body of orthodox Christians, from the apostolic day; and, as we shall endeavor to show, is the doctrine of the Bible.

I. PERSONALITY. In the first place, we shall endeavor to establish the personality of the Holy Spirit. By this we here mean that the Holy Spirit is a real being, possessing intelligence, and performing personal actions; not, however, a being distinct and separate in essence from the Father. We understand the one undivided essence or being in the Godhead to exist in three distinct persons—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We would prove the personality of the Holy Ghost, 1. By the *appellations;* 2. By the *actions;* 3. By the *honors*, ascribed to him. If these be such as can only be applicable to a real and personal existence, then the inference will be clear that the Holy Spirit is a real and personal being, and not a mere abstract attribute, energy, or influence.

1. The *appellations* used in the Scriptures, in reference to the Holy Spirit, are such as properly belong to none but a personal existence; consequently they demonstrate the Holy Spirit's personality.

First, the *masculine pronouns* in the Greek New Testment are constantly applied to the Holy Spirit. In John xiv. 26, we read: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, *he* shall teach you all things." Here the pronoun *he*, the masculine gender, is used, which would be highly improper if a real person be not referred to. Again, John xvi. 7, 8: "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send *him* unto you. And when *he* is come, *he* will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Here the masculine pronoun is thrice used to denote the Holy Spirit. To designate the Holy Spirit thus constantly, in a plain, narrative style, by the pronoun "he," if he be not a real person, would be contrary to the well-known rules and usages of language.

We present one more quotation from the same chapter, verses 13–15: "Howbeit, when *he*, the Spirit of truth, is come, *he* will guide you into all truth; for *he* shall not speak of *himself;* but whatsoever *he* shall hear, that shall *he* speak; and *he* will shew you things to come. *He* shall glorify me; for *he* shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore, said I, that *he* shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." The masculine personal pronoun, the strongest appellation of personality in the language, is in this passage applied to the Holy Spirit no less than ten times. Is it possible for us to read this passage, and believe the Holy Spirit to be a mere abstract attribute, quality, energy, or influence, without so much as a personal existence? If this passage does not imply that he is a personal and intelligent being, we know of no language that could teach the idea. Again: he is over and over spoken of under the appellation of the "Comforter;" and this term is used as a proper name (in Greek, the *Paraclete*) to designate an intelligent agent, and not an abstract quality or influence. Therefore we conclude, from the appellations used in the Scriptures to denote the Holy Spirit, that he is a personal existence.

2. The *actions* attributed to the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures prove his personality.

If these are seen to be personal in their character, such as can only pertain to a personal and real intelligence, then the argument for the personality of the Holy Spirit will be conclusive. In the passages already quoted, the following acts are attributed to the Holy Spirit,

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viz.: 1. To be sent. 2. To teach. 3. To come. 4. To reprove. 5. To guide. 6. To speak. 7. To hear. 8. To show. 9. To glorify. 10. To receive. 11. To take. Here are as many as eleven different personal acts only proper to a being of intelligence and personality; consequently the Holy Spirit must be a personal being.

Again, in Acts v. 32, we read: "And we are his *witnesses* of these things, and so is also *the Holy Ghost*, whom God hath given to them that obey him." John xv. 26: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall *testify* of me." In these passages the Holy Spirit is said to bear witness, or testify--a personal act, which evinces his personality. In Acts xiii. 2, we read: "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost *said*, Separate *me* Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I* have *called* them." In this verse there are no less than four proofs of the personality of the Holy Spirit. The personal pronoun is used twice—*me* and *I*—and the Holy Ghost is represented as having "*said*" or spoken to the apostles, and as having "called" Barnabas and Saul; and again, in the fourth verse, the Holy Ghost is said to have "sent forth" Barnabas and Saul.

In 1 Cor. ii. 10, we read: "For the Spirit *searcheth all things*, yea, the deep things of God." Verse 13: "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost *teacheth*." In these passages, the Holy Spirit is represented as searching and teaching--personal acts, which prove his personality.

In Rom. viii. 26, we read: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself *maketh intercession* for us with *groanings* which cannot be uttered." Now we might ask, If the Spirit be a mere abstract quality or energy, how such an abstraction can intercede and groan? To what strange interpretation of Scripture shall we be driven, if we deny the personality of the Holy Spirit!

3. The *honors* ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures are such as properly appertain to none but a personal being, and consequently they prove his personality.

(1) First, he is honored by *an association with the Father and the Son, in the exalted record in heaven.*

1 John v. 7: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost." Here it is evident that the Father and the Word are personal intelligences; and from the association of the Holy Spirit with them, we have equal reason to admit his

personality; otherwise we should have to suppose that the Father and the Word are both persons, but that the Holy Spirit is merely an energy or influence exerted by one or both of the other witnesses, and, as such, his record would be unmeaning and useless; for what could it add to the record of the Father and the Word?

(2) Again: the honor of *an association with the Father and the Son, in the sacred ordinance of baptism*, is ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

Matt. xxviii. 19: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Now, if the Holy Ghost be not a personal existence, how are we to understand this solemn dedication? We are dedicated, 1. To the person of the father; 2. To the person of the Son; and 3. To what? Not the person of the Spirit, but a mere attribute or energy, something having no personal existence. How strangely absurd the idea! Thus we arrive at the conclusion, from the *appellations*, the *actions*, and the *honors* ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, that he is a real and personal intelligence.

II. Real Divinity. We come now to consider the evidence in favor of the real and Supreme Deity of the Holy Spirit. The testimony on this point, like that in favor of the Deity of Christ, is derived from four different sources: the *titles*, *attributes*, *works*, and *honors*, ascribed to him in the Scriptures.

1. The *titles* ascribed to the Holy Spirit establish his proper Deity.

(1) He is called God. In Acts v. 3, 4, we read: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the *Holy Ghost*, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto *God*." Here, in the most express and full sense of the word, the Holy Ghost is called God. And if he be not God, the passage is made directly to teach a falsehood.

(2) He is called "The Lord of hosts." In Isa. vi. 5, 9, 10, we read: "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the *Lord of hosts*." "And he said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." Now read Acts xxviii. 25–27: "And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had

spoken one word, Well spake the *Holy Ghost* by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive. For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Here we discover that the person who appeared unto Isaiah, and who is by him called the Lord of hosts, is by St. Paul in his quotation expressly called the Holy Ghost. The Lord of hosts is one of the highest titles of the Deity; but if the Holy Ghost be the Lord of hosts, then it will follow that the Holy Ghost must be God. Thus it is clear that the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures is styled God, and the Lord of hosts. But these titles can properly be applied to none but the Supreme God; therefore the Holy Ghost must be the Supreme God.

2. The *attributes* ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures demonstrate his real divinity.

(1) *Eternity.*—This attribute is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. In Heb. ix. 14, we read: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the *eternal Spirit* offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Here the Holy Spirit is called eternal. But that attribute can belong to none but God; consequently he is God.

(2) *Omniscience* is in the Scriptures ascribed to the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. ii. 10: "For the Spirit searcheth *all things*, yea, *the deep things of God.*" From this passage it is clear that the Holy Ghost is omniscient; consequently he must be very and eternal God.

(3) *Omnipotence* is in the Scriptures ascribed to the Holy Spirit. In Rom. xv. 19, we read: "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the *power of the Spirit* of God." That the power of the Spirit here spoken of was infinite, is evident from the miraculous energy which he is here said to have exercised. But as this mighty power belongs to God alone, therefore the Holy Spirit must be God.

(4) *Omnipresence* is in the Scriptures ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Ps. cxxxix. 7: "Whither shall I go from thy *Spirit*, or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" 1 Cor. iii. 16: "Know ye not that ye are the *temple* of God, and that the *Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*" Rom. viii. 9: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the *Spirit of God dwell in you.*" These passages show that the Holy Spirit is omnipresent; otherwise it would not be impossible to "flee from his presence," nor could he dwell at the same time in the hearts of all his

people in all places. But this attribute belongs to none but God; therefore the Holy Spirit is God.

3. The *works* attributed to the Holy Spirit in the Bible attest his proper divinity.

(1) *Creation* is a work proper to God alone; but that this is ascribed to the Holy Spirit, appears from the following passages:—Job xxxiii. 4: "The *Spirit of God hath made me*, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Job xxvi. 13: "By his *Spirit* he hath *garnished the heavens;* his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." Here we see the work of creation ascribed to the Holy Spirit. But that is a work proper to God alone; therefore the Holy Spirit is God.

(2) *Preservation* is a work ascribed to the Holy Spirit. In Ps. li. 12, we read: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and *uphold me with thy free Spirit.*" Here the work of preservation is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. But this is a work of God alone; therefore the Holy Spirit is God.

(3) *Inspiration of the prophets* is a work proper to God alone; but this, in the Scriptures, is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. In 2 Pet. i. 21, we read: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were *moved by the Holy Ghost.*" Here we see that it was the Holy Ghost who inspired the prophets; but in Heb. i. 1, we read: "*God*, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets." Hence it was God who inspired the prophets; therefore the Holy Spirit must be God.

We have now clearly seen from the Scriptures that the exalted works of *creation*, *preservation*, and the *inspiration of the prophets*, are all attributed to the Holy Spirit. But these are works again and again attributed to God, and which none but the infinite God can perform; therefore the Holy Spirit must be very and eternal God.

4. *Honors.*—We come next to consider the exalted *honors* ascribed to the Holy Spirit. If these are such as can properly belong to God alone, it will necessarily follow that the Holy Spirit is God.

(1) *Supreme majesty* is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. In Matt. xii. 31, we read: "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." Here we see that the Holy Ghost may be sinned against, and even so blasphemed that the sin cannot be forgiven. A character so revered and majestic can be no other than the Supreme God.

(2) The Holy Spirit is honored by an *association with the Father*

and the Son in baptism, as seen in Matt. xxviii. 19; and also in the divine benediction, as seen in 2 Cor. xiii. 14. These divine and exalted associations cannot be understood, in any sense consistent with the pure worship of God, without admitting the Supreme Deity of the Holy Spirit. God represents himself as "a jealous God, who will not give his honor to another." But if the name of a mere creature, attribute, or influence, be connected with God the Father, in the most solemn forms of religious worship, how can we contemplate the subject without seeing therein the most direct encouragement to idolatry. Surely the supreme majesty and exalted associations which we have just seen ascribed to the Holy Spirit, attest his proper divinity.

Thus have we shown that the exalted *titles*, *attributes*, *works*, and *honors*, ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, demonstrate his real and Supreme Godhead. Whereas, if we deny the Godhead of the Holy Spirit, we are reduced to the glaring absurdity of saying that the highest titles, the supreme attributes, the most exalted works, and the most sacred honors of the Deity himself, are, in the Scriptures, most explicitly and repeatedly ascribed to a mere abstract attribute, emanation, energy, or influence, possessing no personal or conscious existence whatever; and that, too, in the volume expressly designed to destroy every species of idolatry. Surely it must be plain, that to deify an influence, or any thing else besides the great and eternal Being, is as really idolatry as to bow down before stocks and stones, or "birds, and beasts, and creeping things." But, according to the Bible, God is a Spirit," and that Holy Spirit is God.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IV.

QUESTION 1. What is the Hebrew word in the Old Testament, and the Greek word in the New Testament, rendered *Spirit?* and what do they mean?

2. What has been the opinion of Arians, Socinians, etc., concerning the nature of the Holy Spirit?

3. What the view of Trinitarians, and the orthodox generally?

4. What do we mean by the *personality* of the Holy Spirit?

5. From what three different sources are the proofs of the Holy Spirit's *personality* deduced?

6. What is the evidence from the *appellations* of the Holy Spirit?

7. The *actions?* The *honors?*

8. From what four different sources are the proofs of the *Deity* of the Holy Spirit derived?

9. What is the evidence that the Holy Spirit is called *God?*

10. The *Lord of hosts?*

11. What divine *attributes* are ascribed to the Holy Spirit?

12. What is the evidence of his omniscience?

13. Omnipotence?

14. Omnipresence?

15. What exalted *works* are ascribed to the Holy Spirit?

16. What is the evidence that *creation* is ascribed to him?

17. Preservation?

18. Inspiration of the prophets?

19. What divine *honors* are ascribed to him?

20. What is the evidence of his supreme majesty?

21. What exalted associations are ascribed to him?

22. To what glaring absurdity are we reduced, if we deny the supreme Divinity of the Holy Spirit?

CHAPTER V.

THE HOLY TRINITY.

The word *Trinity* is from the Latin *trinitas*, which is a compound word, from *tres*, three, and *unus*, one; therefore, the signification of the word is *three-one*, or, as it is used in theology, *three in one*.

Some have objected to the use of the term Trinity, merely from the fact that it is not found in our version of the Scriptures; but this objection is perfectly frivolous, if it can be shown that the Bible contains the idea which the word properly expresses. It would not require much ingenuity to embody the most heterodox sentiments by a collocation of Scripture phrases; and, on the contrary, truths the most clearly revealed may be correctly expressed without adopting the precise language of Scripture. The paramount object of the student of divinity is, to gain a correct knowledge of the sentiments of revelation.

On the important subject of the Trinity, we will first present an illustration of the orthodox view; secondly, show that it is scriptural; and, thirdly, answer some objections.

I. According to the general sentiment of orthodox Christians, the mode of the divine existence, as well as the essence of the divine nature, is one of the sublime mysteries of God, which is too profound for human wisdom to fathom. Upon this subject it becomes us meekly to receive the information with which revelation has favored us, neither doubting the truth of what has been revealed, nor permitting our speculations to travel beyond the bounds of the inspired record.

By the Trinity, according to our understanding of the Scriptures, we are not to suppose that there are three Gods, and that these three Gods are one God; nor are we to understand that the three persons in the Godhead are one person: either position would not only be unscriptural, but would imply in itself a manifest contradiction.

Nor are we to suppose that in the divine nature there are three distinct intelligent beings, and that these three are so mysteriously and intimately united as to constitute but one being. This, also, would be both unscriptural and self-contradictory. And we may remark, that Socinians, Arians, and others who have written in opposition to the

Trinity, have, very generally, represented the doctrine of Trinitarians according to one or the other of the views already presented.

That some advocates of the Trinity have expressed themselves in so ambiguous or unguarded a manner as, in some degree, to furnish a pretext for this presentation of the orthodox sentiment, must be admitted; but that neither of the views yet presented contains a fair statement of the doctrine, as held by the intelligent Trinitarians generally, may easily be seen by a reference to the creeds of the different orthodox denominations, as well as to the writings of their principal divines. The correct view of the subject, according to the representation of the most eminent orthodox divines, and the view which appears conformable to Scripture, is, that *the Godhead exists under three distinct personalities, at the same time, constituting but one God.* Although God the Father is an intelligent being, God the Son an intelligent being, and God the Holy Spirit an intelligent being, yet that they are not three distinct intelligent beings; but that the three persons in the Godhead are one and the same being, so far as their nature is concerned, yet subsisting in three different persons—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

It may not be unacceptable here to exhibit the opinion of several eminent orthodox divines on this subject, as presented by Dr. Doddridge, in the following words:

"Dr. Waterland, Dr. A. Taylor, with the rest of the Athanasians, assert three proper distinct persons, entirely equal to, and independent upon, each other, yet making up one and the same being; and that though there may appear many things inexplicable in the scheme, it is to be charged to the weakness of our understanding, and not the absurdity of the doctrine itself.

"Bishop Pearson, with whom Bishop Bull also agrees, is of opinion, that though God the Father is the fountain of the Deity, the whole divine nature is communicated from the Father to the Son, and from both to the Spirit, yet so as that the Father and the Son are not separate nor separable from the divinity, but do still exist in it, and are most intimately united to it. This was also Dr. Owen's scheme."

Thus it may be seen that, while it is not pretended that we can comprehend the manner of the existence of three persons in one God, any more than we can fathom the mysterious depths of the divine essence, yet such is the plain statement of the facts in the case, as learned from inspiration, that they involve in themselves no contradiction or absurdity. If we speak of the essential essence of the Divine Being, we say there is but one undivided essence, but one being, but one God; but if we speak of personal distinction, such as is properly expressed by the pronoun *I*

thou, or *he*, we say there are three persons in one and the same God, or one and the same God in three persons. But if we are called upon to explain how three persons can exist in one God, we reply that the subject is neither more nor less difficult than the comprehension of any of the divine attributes. Our faith embraces the fact as a matter of revelation; the manner of the fact, which involves the stupendous mystery, not being revealed, we leave beyond the veil, as a theme which may be presented for contemplation when we "shall know even as also we are known." All attempts, therefore, to explain the mystery of the Trinity, or the manner in which three persons constitute one God, we would repudiate as vain and futile, while we would plant our faith firm and immovable in the truth of the fact as revealed in the Bible.

II. Our second position is, to show that *the doctrine of the Trinity, as already exhibited, is in accordance with the Scriptures.*

1. It is necessarily implied in several positions which we have already seen established, in the preceding chapters.

(1) *Unity of God.*—In the second chapter, we showed, by various and express declarations of Scripture, that there is but *one* God. Indeed, this great principle—the unity of the Godhead—is the very foundation upon which the true worship is established. It is the denial of this which constitutes the greatest error and absurdity of paganism. And we may say that, if the unity of God be not established in the Bible, it is in vain for us to appeal to that volume for testimony on any point whatever. The very first of the ten commandments is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me;" and the constant language of God throughout the Bible is, "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah, our God, is *one* Jehovah." This great truth, then, so essential for the prevention of idolatry, is thus strongly stamped upon the page of inspiration, and, we may add, abundantly confirmed by the harmony displayed in the works of God around us.

(2) *Deity of Christ.*—In the third chapter, we saw the Scripture evidence plainly establishing the real and proper divinity of Jesus Christ. So pointed and direct was this testimony, as seen from the titles, attributes, works, and honors, ascribed to Christ, that, if we reject the doctrine of the Godhead of Christ, we flatly deny the word of God, nor can we appeal again to that volume for the establishment of any truth whatever.

(3) *Deity of the Holy Spirit.*—In the fourth chapter, we saw, with equal clearness and force, and by proofs of a similar character, the real Deity of the Holy Spirit established beyond the possibility of a doubt, unless we discard the Bible itself, and explain away, by a resort to strained and far-fetched criticism, the plainest declarations of the inspired record.

We now ask attention to the foregoing points, universally admitted or clearly established, and demand it at the hands of all who reject the Trinity, to explain and reconcile these points, if they can, without admitting all that is meant by the Trinity.

(1) That God the Father is properly God, all admit.

(2) That the Son is God, has been already proved.

(3) That the Holy Spirit is God, has been already proved.

(4) That there is but one God, has been already proved.

Here, then, we say, is a Trinity clearly established. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three, in one sense of the word at least. The first all admit to be God, and the second and third have been proved to be God. Then it follows that there are three that are God; but it has also been proved that there is but one God. Then we have clearly established a three-one God, which is the same as a Trinity. But it is clear that three cannot be one in the same sense in which they are three. This would be self-contradictory; but for there to be three in one sense, and one in another sense, would involve no contradiction. Then it must be obvious that there are not three and one in the same sense. In what sense, then, shall we understand that there is one? Certainly in reference to the Godhead. There is but one God. But in what sense shall we understand that there are three? Certainly not in reference to the Godhead; for this, as we have seen, would be self contradictory. But it must be understood in reference to some other distinction. This we denominate a personal distinction; first, because it is expressed in the Scriptures by the personal pronouns, *I, thou, he,* etc.; and these, in all languages, are proper appellatives of persons: secondly, the expression of this distinction by the term person is scriptural; for we find the word used to distinguish the person of the Father from that of the Son: "Who being the brightness of *his* (the Father's) glory, and the express image of his *person.*"

Thus have we seen that there is but *one* God, and that in the unity of this Godhead there are *three* distinctions—the *Father,* the *Son,* and the *Holy Spirit;* and that these distinctions are scripturally expressed by the term *person.* Then the sum of the whole matter is this: That there are three persons in one God; or, in other words, the doctrine of the Trinity is a Bible truth.

2. The doctrine of the Trinity is confirmed, by frequent allusions to a *plurality* and *threefold distinction* in the Deity, more or less direct, in almost all parts of the Scriptures.

(1) In the beginning of Genesis, the name by which God first reveals himself to us is *Elohim,* a *plural* noun, the singular form of which is *Eloah.*

Now, if there be no plurality of persons in the Godhead, it is difficult to account for the use of the plural, instead of the singular noun; especially as the verb connected therewith is in the singular number. Hence, there seems to be a strong probability that there is here a plain allusion to the doctrine of the Trinity, which was afterward more clearly revealed.

(2) This conclusion is still farther confirmed by what we read in the 26th verse of the chapter: "And God said, Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness." Here the personal pronoun is used three times in the plural form. To account for this upon any other hypothesis than that there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead, is impossible. But on the supposition that there are three persons in the unity of the Godhead, the matter becomes plain and easy. That the Word, or Son of God, was the active agent in the work of creation, is declared in the first chapter of John; and it is remarkable that the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis introduces the agency of the Spirit also in this great work—"And the *Spirit* of God moved upon the face of the waters." Thus we have the agency of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, all connected in the great work of creation, and yet "he that built (or made) all things is God." Again, in the 22d verse of the third chapter of Genesis, we have this plural form of the pronoun repeated: "And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of *us*, to know good and evil." How difficult must it be for the anti-Trinitarian to find a consistent interpretation!

(3) *The use of the three sacred names in baptism* has already been mentioned in proof of the divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit—to which we may now add that we here see a direct acknowledgment of all the persons of the Trinity. Upon the formula of baptism we remark, that if there be no personal distinction between Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, why the necessity for the three names? and if each person named be not God, why the propriety of connecting the name of a creature, in terms of apparent perfect equality, with the name of the Supreme God, in a solemn act of worship?

(4) In the conclusion of the last chapter of 2 Corinthians, we have *this solemn form of benediction:* "The grace of the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and the love of *God*, and the communion of the *Holy Ghost*, be with you all." This benediction is virtually the offering up of a prayer to the three personages here specified; and from any thing that appears, they are all petitioned with equal solemnity and reverence. If they be not all divine, how could the apostle ever again admonish the Corinthians against idolatry? Surely he had presented them an example of direct homage and supreme worship to a creature!

Thus have we seen the doctrine of the Trinity, or three persons in one God, abundantly established from the Scriptures; first, as necessarily implied in the admitted or established facts, that there is but one God, that God the Father is God, that God the Son is God, and that God the Holy Spirit is God; secondly, we have seen it confirmed by frequent allusions, more or less explicit, in different parts of the Scriptures, to the several persons of the Godhead. We now close our argument with a single quotation from 1 John v. 7, which embodies in one verse the whole doctrine of the Trinity: "For there are *three* that bear record in heaven, the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost*, and *these three are one*."

III. In the last place, we notice the principal *objection* which has been urged against this doctrine. It is this: that "the doctrine of the Trinity is incomprehensible, and requires us to believe in mysteries." To which we reply, that the question with us ought not to be whether we can comprehend the doctrine or not, but whether it is a doctrine declared in the Scriptures or not. If the latter can be established, then the circumstance of its being plain or mysterious to our understanding cannot affect our obligations to believe it in the least. It should be enough for us to know that God has spoken; and what he has declared we are bound to believe, or discard the whole Bible.

That the plain, common-sense interpretation of Scripture teaches the doctrine, we might almost infer from the strong disposition of Socinians to twist from their plain import many passages of Scripture, to expunge others entirely from the sacred canon, and even to undervalue inspiration itself. But the objection is based upon a false premise. It assumes that we ought not to believe any thing till we can comprehend it. If this be true, then we must hang up our flag of high-toned and universal skepticism; for what is there that we can comprehend? From the smallest insect, up through every link "of being's endless chain," there are mysteries—inexplicable mysteries—in every object that we contemplate. But yet we believe firmly in the existence of things. But, after all that has been said by way of objection about the mystery of the Trinity, the difficulty is equally great upon any subject connected with the Divine Being; for what attribute of God is it that we can comprehend? But let it be remembered that the great mystery about which the objection is started, relates not to the fact that there are three persons in one God, but to the manner of the fact. We cannot conceive how it can be; and yet the manner of the fact we are not required to embrace in our faith—that is something not revealed. We are simply required to believe the fact as declared in Scripture.

In conclusion, we might ask, What could we gain, even in respect to exemption from difficulty, by renouncing the Trinity? We reply, that we would involve ourselves in difficulties far more numerous and perplexing. To instance only one: How could we reconcile it to the general tenor of Scripture and the plan of salvation, that the great work of changing the heart, and preparing the soul for heaven, is repeatedly attributed to the "power of Christ," and the "sanctification of the Spirit?" This is a work proper to God alone—a work which none but the divine power can effect; and yet, if we deny the Trinity, we must attribute it, in the supreme sense, to a creature. We must look to the power of a creature to renew our souls, and lean upon a finite arm as the source of our eternal salvation.

The difficulties involved in the anti-Trinitarian scheme might be multiplied, but enough has been said to show that the only consistent and scriptural scheme, and that which involves the least difficulty of all, is this: that there is "one only living and true God, but in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit —of equal power and glory forever." To him be ascribed eternal praise!

"The Scriptures, while they declare the fundamental truth of natural religion, that God is one, reveal two persons, each of whom, with the Father, we are led to consider as God, and ascribe to all the three distinct personal properties. It is impossible that the three can be one in the same sense in which they are three; and therefore it follows, by necessary inference, that the unity of God is not a unity of persons; but it does not follow that it may not be a unity of a more intimate kind than any which we behold. A unity of consent and will neither corresponds to the conclusions of reason, nor is by any means adequate to a great part of the language of Scripture, for both concur in leading us to suppose a unity of nature. Whether the substance common to the three persons be specifically or numerically the same, is a question the discussion of which cannot advance our knowledge, because neither of the terms is applicable to the subject; and, after all our researches and reading, we shall find ourselves just where we began—incapable of perceiving the manner in which the three persons partake of the same divine nature. But we are very shallow philosophers indeed, if we consider this as any reason for believing that they do not partake of it; for we are by much too ignorant of the manner of the divine existence to be warranted to say that the distinction of persons is an infringement of the divine unity. 'It is strange boldness in men,' says Bishop Stillingfleet, 'to talk of contradictions in things above their reach. Hath

not God revealed to us that he created all things? and is it not reasonable for us to believe this, unless we are able to comprehend the manner of doing it? Hath not God plainly revealed that there shall be a resurrection of the dead? And must we think it unreasonable to believe it, till we are able to comprehend all the changes of the particles of matter from the creation to the general resurrection? If nothing is to be believed but what may be comprehended, the very being of God must be rejected, and all his unsearchable perfections. If we believe the attributes of God to be infinite, how can we comprehend them? We are strangely puzzled in plain, ordinary, finite things; but it is madness to pretend to comprehend what is infinite; and yet, if the perfections of God be not infinite, they cannot belong to him.' Since then the Scriptures teach that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one, and since the unity of three persons who partake of the same divine nature must of necessity be a unity of the most perfect kind, we may rest assured that the more we can abstract from every idea of inequality, division, and separation, provided we preserve the distinction of persons, our conceptions approach the nearer to the truth." (Hill's Lectures.)

The Bible doctrine of the Trinity is one of those sublime and glorious mysteries which the mind of man, at least while shrouded in clay, cannot penetrate. We may study and meditate until *lost* in thought, yet never can we comprehend the mode and nature of the Divine Being. A trinity of persons, in the unity of Godhead, is something of which we can form no definite idea. The *fact* is revealed to us, beyond contradiction, in God's holy word. But, as to the *manner* of that fact, God says to reason, noble and mighty as is that faculty of the soul, "Thus far shalt thou go," "and here shall thy proud" flight "be stayed;" and while reason lies thus humbled in the dust, shorn of her vaunted strength, and perhaps sullenly murmuring she will never essay another heavenward flight, faith meekly whispers, "I am the resurrection and the life." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." And when we shall have thrown off this earthly vestment for the "robe of righteousness," and when "we shall know even as also we are known," who can say what things may not be revealed to us? What knowledge *can* be so desirable to an immortal spirit as the knowledge of its Maker? Yet, hidden as are the mysteries of the Christian faith, they are not gloomy nor dark; for they concern Him who is light, and love, and life. We are bound to believe all God has graciously revealed of himself; and it is no argument against

belief in the Trinity, to say it is a mystery incomprehensible. Dost thou, proud mortal, doubt or disbelieve thine own existence? and yet, canst thou tell *how* the coursing of the red fluid through the veins preserves thee a probationer in time? "Lord, I do believe; help thou mine unbelief." Let me know thee in the pardon of all my sins through the Son of thy love, and in the enlightening and comforting influences of thy Holy Spirit! *Here* let me walk by faith, till "faith is turned to sight" in a brighter world, and I shall see without the dimming veil of mortality before my raptured vision!

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER V.

QUESTION 1. From what is the term *Trinity* derived, and what is its import?
2. Why has the use of the term been objected to?
3. Is the objection a reasonable and just one?
4. What are the three grand divisions of this chapter?
5. Can we thoroughly comprehend the mode of the divine existence?
6. Are we to understand by the Trinity, *three* persons in *one* person, or three *Gods* in one God?
7. Are we to understand that there are *three* distinct intelligent beings in the Godhead?
8. How have Socinians, etc., generally represented the doctrine of Trinitarians?
9. How may this statement be seen to be unfair?
10. What is the correct view of the doctrine of the Trinity?
11. Is each person in the Trinity an intelligent being?
12. Are there, then, in essence, three distinct intelligent beings?
13. What were the views of several eminent divines, on this subject, as given by Dr. Doddridge?
14. To what does the great mystery of the Trinity relate?
15. What are the grand positions established in preceding chapters, in which the doctrine of the Trinity is implied?
16. In what sense are we to understand that *three* are *one*?
17. How are the distinctions in the Godhead shown to be properly expressed by the term *person*?
18. What allusion to the doctrine of the Trinity is seen in the first of Genesis?
19. How does it appear that the three persons of the Trinity all had an agency in creation?
20. How is the Trinity proved from the form of baptism?
21. From the form of the benediction?
22. What verse of Scripture embodies the whole doctrine of the Trinity?
23. What is the grand objection to this doctrine?
24. How is the objection answered?
25. Do the opposite sentiments involve difficulties?
26. What is the instance given?
27. What is the least perplexing and most scriptural view?

CHAPTER VI.

THE CREATION.

I. We examine *the nature of creation.*

The original word rendered *created*, in the first of Genesis, is *bara*, which, according to Kimchi, Buxtorf, and learned critics generally, means to bring forth into being what previously had no existence—an egression from nonentity to entity. From the prime meaning of the word itself, as well as from the process, as presented in the Mosaic record, we learn that God, "in the beginning," or at the commencement of time, made or created the matter of which the heavens and the earth were formed.

Many of the ancient heathens, ignorant of revelation, and guided only by the wild speculations of their own imagination, had such inadequate conceptions of the character of Deity, that they could not conceive it possible for him to create the material universe out of nothing. Hence they supposed that *matter, in a chaotic state, existed from all eternity*, and that the Deity only arranged and combined the discordant materials, so as to bring order out of confusion, and cause the universe to appear in its harmony and beauty.

As we have already seen, this fabulous account of creation is contrary to the Mosaic history. St. Paul, in Heb. xi. 3, appears to aim a blow directly at this error of the pagan philosophers, when he tells us: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." The "things which do appear" are material; but, according to the text just quoted, the worlds were not made of preëxistent matter. Indeed, the first work of creation, according to the Bible, appears to have been to call forth into being the materials of which the worlds were afterward framed. Thus we perceive that God, in the highest sense of the word, created all things out of nothing.

It might easily be shown that the Mosaic account of the origin of the world is the only consistent theory of the material universe ever presented. The views upon this subject of those who have rejected revelation, may all be embraced in two general divisions. First, the system

already noticed, which admits the eternity of matter, but allows that the power of God was exerted in forming out of the original materials furnished to his hand, and which were coëxistent with him, the worlds as we see them displayed around us.

The second theory is that which teaches the eternity of the material universe, *in its properly organized condition.*

Both these theories are not only not countenanced by revelation, but are in direct contradiction to its plain declarations. That they are also absurd in themselves, and encumbered by insuperable difficulties, in the view of reason, a little reflection will clearly evince.

First, to suppose that matter existed from eternity, is to ascribe to it *self-existence.* That which existed from eternity could not have been produced by any thing else; consequently all the cause of its existence must be in itself; and this implies that it is self-existent and independent. Again: that which is self-existent and independent must exist necessarily; for if the cause of its existence has always been in itself, it could not but have existed; otherwise the necessary connection between cause and effect would be destroyed. Hence, if we say that matter existed from eternity, we assert that it existed necessarily; and if its existence was necessary, so were all its parts and properties; for the parts and properties of any substance inhere in the constitution of its essence. It appears, therefore, that if matter is eternal, it must exist necessarily in all its parts and properties. And if so, the particular state in which it exists must be necessary; and then, the same eternal necessity in itself, which determined the state of its existence, must determine its continuance in the same state; consequently if matter had existed from eternity in a chaotic form, it must have continued forever in the same form; and upon that hypothesis the worlds could never have been produced from chaos. Thus the eternity of matter is seen to be unreasonable and absurd.

In the second place, to suppose that the world existed from all eternity, in its organized state, is *unreasonable.*

For, first, if eternal, it must be so in all its parts; and if in all its parts, then the inhabitants thereof are included; but to suppose an eternal succession of animals, would be to suppose an infinite number made up of finite numbers, which would be unreasonable; for we may add as many finite numbers together as we please, yet they never can amount to infinity.*

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* Bishop Pearson remarks that "The actual eternity of this world is so far from being necessary, that it is of itself most improbable; and without the infallible

The present state of improvement in the arts and sciences argues against the eternity of the world. As a natural consequence, each generation may profit by the labors and experience of the preceding one, so that the natural course of improvement from age to age is progressive, but all the great and important inventions and discoveries in the arts and sciences are of comparatively recent origin. To account for this upon the supposition that men have eternally existed upon the earth, would be exceedingly difficult.

Once more: the comparatively modern date of the most ancient records, is another argument against the eternity of the world in its organized state. Had the nations of the earth existed from all eternity, we might reasonably suppose that history, monumental or recorded, would carry us back for multiplied hundreds of centuries. These are only a few of the difficulties with which we find ourselves entangled when, in reference to the origin of the world, we wish to become "wise above what is written."

II. *The date of creation.*

According to the Septuagint, the date of creation is placed near six thousand years before Christ; but Archbishop Usher has shown, to the general satisfaction of the learned, that, according to the Hebrew chronology, the creation took place four thousand and four years previous to the birth of Christ. The original Hebrew is certainly better authority than a translation which, like the Septuagint, is admitted to contain many mistakes. Accordingly the computation of Usher has been generally acceded to as correct.

Corroborative testimony to the correctness of this account may be gathered from general history and traditionary legends of the different nations of the earth. None of these, which bear any evidence of authenticity, extend so far as the date of Moses; and from the representation which they make, in reference to the times of their earliest date, the evidence can scarcely be resisted that the world was then in a state of infancy.

For a quarter of a century past, there has been awakened, both in Europe and America, an exciting interest on the subject of geology. What has added intensity to this interest is the impression on the minds of many that the principles and facts of that new and interesting department of natural science come in conflict with the teachings of revelation. The avidity with which the skeptical inclinations of some

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certainty of faith, there is no single person carries more evidences of his youth than the world of its novelty." (Exposition of the Creed.)

shallow-minded sciolists have led them boastingly to parade the new discoveries of geology as a scientific demonstration discrediting the historic record of Moses in reference to the date of creation, has originated in the minds of many intelligent Christians a suspicious jealousy in reference to geological science. Among our eminent theological writers, Richard Watson, of England, and Moses Stuart, of our own country, threw the weight of their great names in the scale against the pretensions of geology.

It has, however, now become clearly perceptible to the most sober-minded and profound thinkers, both among philosophers and divines, that geological science, as set forth by her ablest devotees, has no principles or facts to array against the teachings of the Bible. Mere empirics in science, as Cowper expressed it,

> "Drill and bore
> The solid earth, and from the strata there
> Extract a register, by which we learn
> That He who made it, and revealed its date
> To Moses, was mistaken in its age."

But to pretend that revelation has any thing to fear or to lose by its contact with geology, is evidence at once of the weakness of human reason, and of a lack of correct information on the subjects involved. When the Copernican system of astronomy was first proclaimed, after the shock produced by its novelty had subsided, and the smoke of a fierce but short-lived controversy had been blown away, what loss had revelation sustained? The sun continued to rise and set, and the earth to revolve in her orbit and wheel on her axis, with the same regularity they had observed from the beginning; and the advocates of revelation read the sacred page with a deeper interest, and interpreted its record with a clearer light. Just so it will assuredly be with the discoveries of geology. Light may be shed on the interpretation of the text, producing greater harmony of view in the department of exegesis, but the truth of the record will only stand the more thoroughly vindicated, and the more highly appreciated.

From the earliest ages of Christianity to the present day, learned commentators have differed in their interpretation of the record of creation, as given by Moses in the first chapter of Genesis. Without an attempt to decide at present between the claims of these different interpretations, we proceed to show that, according to any of them, all the agreed facts of geology (the most intelligent geologists themselves being judges) may be fully admitted, and yet the record of Moses stand secure—neither disproved, discredited, nor in the least shaken.

1. The interpretation which has ever been the most generally adopted by biblical expositors, is that which is the most *literal*. It assumes that Moses, in the first chapter of Genesis, dates the "beginning" of creation at the commencement of his "six days;" and that during those "days" God called into being from nonentity the entire universe of finite existences, whether material or immaterial.

Now, admitting this to be the proper construction of the language of Moses, how can the facts of geology disprove or invalidate his record? Suppose all the learned geologists in the world were to agree that, according to the time occupied in the formation of the strata of the earth, in all parts where the examination has been made and the time of the formation ascertained, the date of creation should be fixed many millions of years anterior to the date of Moses, what reliance could be placed on this description of evidence? Let the philosopher dig his fossil from the earth, or rend the granite from the mountain; let him examine its structure, and analyze its essence, and calculate the time requisite for its formation by the action of fire and water, what can he thus prove as to the date of creation? May not the Christian reply, Is not God omnipotent? And was not his creative act a miracle? Might he not, therefore, have formed and arranged all those particles just as they now appear in a single day as easily as in a million of centuries? That he *could* have so done, none can deny: that he *did not* so do, geology has not proved, and, in the nature of things, cannot prove. Where, then, is the skeptical argument against the record of Moses? It is scattered to the winds.

Creation, in all its parts, had a beginning: men, trees, and plants, no more certainly than rocks. Man was not made first an infant, but he appeared at once in the maturity and perfection of his powers. And who can doubt that the trees of paradise were originally created in fruit-bearing maturity? Why might we not build a similar argument from the bones and muscles of Adam the next morning after his creation, and prove thereby that he was then fifty or two hundred years old? Or, from an examination of the folds in the wood of a tree of paradise an hour after it was spoken into being, why might we not, by the same mode of argument, demonstrate that it was the growth of a century? If, therefore, God could form the body of man in all its bones, sinews, and muscles, and the wood of the tree in all its folds, circles, and texture, just as they would subsequently appear after passing by a regular process of years to maturity, could he not create the rocks and fossil remains of geology in a similar way? Let the skeptic answer the question.

If it be argued, that for the regular formation of the earth, for its transition from a fluid to a solid state, and for the production of its peculiar structure, a period immensely longer is requisite than that allowed by the "six days" of Moses—if this position be urged, may it not be replied that the infinite power of God could have accomplished the whole work, however complicated and stupendous, just as easily in an hour as in millions of years? To speak of a great length of time being requisite for perfecting the work of creation, is manifestly inconsistent with a correct understanding of the divine perfections.

Admit the alleged facts of geology—admit that these facts, sufficiently numerous and pertinent, have been so established as to remove all doubt from the position that the earth is immensely more than six thousand years old — what then? Has the Bible been discredited? Has the Mosaic record been demonstrated a myth, a fable, or a fraud? By no means. The citadel of revelation can sustain a thousand such assaults, and its foundation not be shaken nor its pillars give way. But Christianity is not *shut up* to the *literal* interpretation of the Mosaic record of creation.

2. Another method of interpreting the first chapter of Genesis, is to assume that the phrase "in the beginning," with which the chapter opens, is to be understood as referring to a period immensely distant in the past, in which "God created the heaven and the earth"—a period far removed from the "six days" of which Moses speaks.

Now, if this interpretation be allowed, what more is requisite to bring the geological into full harmony with the biblical record? Admit that Moses does not fix the epoch of the creation of matter; that an interval of indefinite length may have preceded the six days' work—admit this, and if those "six days" may have been natural days, what more do we need? That this is sufficient to harmonize the geological with the biblical record, some of the most eminent geologists have conceded; among whom we may mention Dr. J. Pye Smith, Dr. Buckland, Dr. Harris, Dr. King, Prof. Sedgwick, and various others.

Although the theory here under review has been adopted very generally by Christian geologists, it is not indebted to that modern science for its origin. It was sanctioned by learned commentators in the early ages of Christianity. It was adopted by Augustin, Theodoret, Justin Martyr, Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, and Origen. In more modern times, it was favored by Bishops Patrick, Horsley, and Gleig, as also by Baumgarten, and many others.

Dr. Chalmers has likewise thrown the weight of his great name in favor of this theory. He says: "The detailed history of creation, in

the first chapter of Genesis, begins at the middle of the second verse; and what precedes might be understood as an introductory sentence, by which we are most appositely told both that God created all things at the first, and that afterward—by what interval of time is not specified—the earth lapsed into a chaos, from the darkness and disorder of which the present system or economy of things was made to arise. Between the initial act and the details of Genesis, the world, for aught we know, might have been the theater of many revolutions, the traces of which geology may still investigate."

3. Another theory on the subject is, that the six demiurgic days are to be construed as *metaphorical* days, each implying an indefinite but long period—perhaps thousands of years.

This view of the subject was sanctioned by Josephus, Philo, Augustin, and the Venerable Bede. In Germany, it was adopted by Hahn, Hensler, and Knapp. In England, it has been advocated by Professors Lee and Wait, of Cambridge University; in Scotland, by Hugh Miller; and by Bush, Barrows, and Hitchcock, in this country.

Some of the abettors of this theory, while they contend that the demiurgic days should be construed *metaphorically*—representing a long period—yet concede that Moses understood them as *literal* days. Thus they suppose that he, like some of the prophets, understood not the full import of the things he was inspired to write; and that, like as prophecy is explained by the developments of history, so the record of Moses concerning the past finds its illustration in the developments of geology. Probably most intelligent Christians of the present day will be inclined, with Chalmers, to favor the second theory of interpretation which we have presented in regard to the Mosaic record of creation; but whatever may be our decision in this respect, we need have no apprehension that the Bible can suffer from scientific discovery or investigation. What though the mere sciolist may seize upon geology as unfriendly to revelation, yet the more thoroughly its facts and principles become known and understood, the more manifest becomes the truth that, like the developments of astronomy, they only tend to the elucidation and confirmation of the Bible record.

III. The *extent* of creation is the next point to be considered.

A question of interest to some minds, though entirely speculative in its character, is this: Are we to suppose that Moses gives an account of the entire creation of God, or merely of our world and those worlds with which we are more or less connected, while many other systems of worlds throughout the immensity of space may have been created perhaps millions of ages anterior to that date?

On the one hand it has been said that to suppose the Almighty to have remained alone, a solitary being amid immensity, from all eternity, till a few thousand years ago, without once putting forth his creative energies, does not comport with a rational view of the wonder-working Jehovah.

Again, it is argued that "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," at the birth of creation; and that, as we may conclude from the history of the fall, the angels must have been created some time previous to the Mosaic creation, that sufficient time may be allowed for their apostasy and subsequent early attack upon man in paradise.

To all this, it has been replied, first, that however long the period which we suppose creation to have commenced previous to the "six days" of Moses, still, if it had a commencement at all, there must have been an eternity before it commenced, and, therefore, the Deity must have existed alone, just as long as if nothing had been created till the "six days" specified by Moses; unless we say that one eternity is longer than another, which is absurd. Again, with regard to the angels rejoicing at the birth of creation, it is replied that they might have been created on the first or second day, or among the first of God's works, and so have been ready to rejoice as they saw the different parts of creation rising up after them. As to their having had time to fall from their first estate, and appear so early in paradise to seduce our first parents, it is replied that none can tell how suddenly they may have rebelled and been expelled from heaven, or how long man may have existed in paradise before he was visited by the tempter. Upon so difficult a question we would scarce volunteer an opinion. This much, at least, seems clear, that the entire system of which our world forms a part, was created in the "six days."

Again, it has been asked, Is creation limited in extent, or is it spread out infinitely throughout the immensity of space? To this, we may be allowed to reply that, as creation must be finite in its different parts, it cannot be infinite in the aggregate; for infinity cannot be made up of finite parts; therefore, whatever we may say as to the unlimited nature of simple space, we conclude that the creation of God must be limited in its extent. At the same time that we avow the belief that the creation of God is not absolutely unlimited in extent, we must also admit that we have abundant reason to infer that the works of God are vast and extensive. This world of ours is only a speck, compared with the numerous and extensive orbs connected with our own system. How exceedingly small, then, must it appear, when we embrace in our con-

templation those numerous systems which we may suppose to be spread out amid the vast expanse around us! To suppose that the Creator had formed so great a number of mighty globes for no grand and important purpose, would directly impeach his wisdom; therefore, the reasonable inference is, that they are peopled by an innumerable multitude of intelligent beings, brought into existence by the power of Omnipotence, for the wise and good purpose of showing forth the perfections and glory of Him who "filleth all in all."

But we now inquire more particularly concerning the *intelligent* part of creation. So far as our information has extended, the intelligent creation may all be embraced in two classes—*angels* and *men*. The Bible furnishes some account of the history, character, and employment of these two classes of beings; and we will endeavor to ascertain, to some extent, the important information within our reach on this interesting theme. We reserve, however, for a subsequent chapter, the consideration of the primeval state of man.

Angels. The term *angel* is from the Greek *angelos*, and signifies, primarily, not a nature, but an *office*. It means a *messenger*, or one sent on an embassy.

But the term is very generally used in Scripture to denote a superior order of intelligences inhabiting the heavenly regions. Here, on the very threshold of the subject, we are met by a skeptical objection. Some have even denied the very existence of such beings. In the twenty-third chapter and eighth verse of the Acts, we learn that the Sadducees denied the existence of angels and spirits. This ancient heresy has had its advocates in almost every age of the world, even among professed believers in revelation. As the Scriptures in numerous passages speak of angels as intelligent and real beings, those who have denied their real existence have been compelled to explain all these passages in a figurative sense. Thus, when unholy angels are spoken of, we are told that nothing is implied but evil principles or unholy thoughts; and when holy angels are spoken of, we are told that nothing is meant but good principles or holy thoughts. To such as make thus free with their Bibles, and entirely subvert, by so palpable an absurdity, the plainest declarations of Scripture, we would only say, Go on, if you choose. If the plain account of Scripture does not convince you of the real existence of angels, to reason with you would be perfectly useless. Indeed, if the entire Bible history of the existence and doings of angels is an allegory or figure, we may as well discard the whole volume of revelation as an idle dream or a silly fable.

From the Bible we learn that there are two descriptions of angels—

fallen or *unholy* spirits, and *holy* or *good* spirits. We inquire briefly concerning each.

1. Of Unholy Angels. That these, as they proceeded from the hand of the Creator, were both holy and happy beings, we may clearly infer from the divine character. He who is perfectly holy and good could not have produced unholy and miserable beings. His nature forbids it. In confirmation of this truth, we read in the first of Genesis: "And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was *very good.*" Well may we be assured that every creature, as it first came from the creating hand, was free from the least taint of moral evil. That these evil angels were once holy and happy, and fell from that exalted state, is clearly taught in the following passages:—John viii. 44: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning, and *abode not in the truth;* because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." Jude 6: "And the angels which *kept not their first estate,* but *left their own habitation,* he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." 2 Pet. ii. 4: "For if God spared not the angels that *sinned,* but *cast them down to hell,* and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."

From these texts we learn that the devil "abode not in the truth," (implying that he was once in it,) and that the sinning angels left their original habitation, and are now dwellers in the regions of darkness. These are the plain scriptural facts.

The question has often been asked, How came they to sin? There has been much curious speculation in endeavoring to account for the origin of moral evil. That the angels were under a law, is clear from the fact that they sinned; and if under a law which it was possible for them to violate, they must have been in a state of trial and accountability to God. With all these facts in reference to their condition before us, we see no more difficulty in accounting for their fall than for the fall of man, except that no foreign tempter could have seduced the former. Here we are asked, How could they fall into sin without being first tempted? And how could they be tempted, when, as yet, there was nothing evil in the universe? This much we may say in their case:

First, that they did sin and fall, the Scriptures declare.

Second, that there was no evil being in the universe to tempt them to sin, we may clearly infer from the Scriptures.

But how it was that they sinned without being tempted; or, if self-tempted, how they could have originated the temptation within their

own nature, which as yet was holy, perhaps we cannot fully comprehend; but the facts are revealed, and we are compelled to believe them. Some light, however, may be reflected upon this subject, when we remember that the possibility of sinning is essential to a state of accountability. And, therefore, to say that God could not make it possible for angels to sin, without first creating moral evil, would be to say that God could not create a moral accountable agent, which would be alike irreconcilable with the divine character and the Bible testimony. Having premised these things, in reference to the fall of angels, we would now inquire concerning their *nature, employment,* and *destiny.*

(1) THEIR NATURE. That they are *spiritual* beings, is evident from the Scriptures: "He maketh his angels *spirits;*" but to comprehend the precise manner in which these spiritual essences exist, is, with us, impossible.

That they are *unholy* and *unhappy* is also clearly manifest from the place of their present habitation; they are said to be "reserved in chains under darkness," and to have been "cast down to *Tartarus,* or *hell.*" As hell is represented to be their principal abode, and that by way of punishment for their sin, we see that they are in a state of torment; but we are not to infer that they are absolutely confined to their prison. This, the history of the fall of man, as well as many other parts of the Scriptures, contradicts. They are capable of visiting our world, and perhaps other parts of the universe; but wherever they may be, they are still "unclean spirits, seeking rest and finding none." They cannot escape from their wretchedness.

(2) EMPLOYMENT. The Bible teaches us something concerning the employment of these spirits.

First. *They are sometimes permitted to afflict the bodies of men.*

This we learn from the history of Job. Satan was the agent by whom he was grievously afflicted with disease. We learn the same from the many diseased persons in the days of our Saviour, said to be possessed of devils.

It has been alleged, it is true, that these were not really and literally possessed of devils, but that they were diseased with epilepsy, palsy, madness, etc.; and that they were figuratively said to be "possessed of devils." To this we would reply, in the language of Dr. Campbell, of Scotland: "When we find mention made of the number of demons in particular possessions, their actions so expressly distinguished from those of the men possessed, conversations held by the former in regard to the disposal of them after their expulsion, and accounts given how they were actually disposed of; when we find diseases and passions ascribed

peculiarly to them, and similitudes taken from the conduct which they usually observe, it is impossible to deny their existence, without admitting that the sacred historians were either deceived themselves with regard to them, or intended to deceive their readers."

Second. *They are permitted to exercise an evil influence over the minds and hearts of men*, as appears from the following passages:—Eph. vi. 12: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Rev. xx. 7, 8: "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison; and shall go out to deceive the nations." 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10: "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." In Eph. ii. 2, Satan is called "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." In 2 Cor. ii. 11, St. Paul says, "we are not ignorant of his devices;" and in 1 Pet. v. 8, he is said to be "as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour."

From these scriptures we learn that evil spirits are endeavoring, by diligent and persevering effort, to destroy the souls of men; but for our encouragement be it known, that they can only go the length of their chain. They can tempt, but they cannot coerce us to sin; and we are told to "resist the devil, and he will flee from us."

(3) Their Destiny. We learn from the Scriptures that these evil spirits are "reserved in chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." Again, the place of "everlasting fire," to which the wicked are to be sentenced at judgment, is said to be "prepared for the devil and his angels." From all which we infer that, though they are now in torment, they are reserved for the judgment, when a more dismal doom awaits them. For them there is no redemption, no mercy, no hope.

The question has been asked, Why might not provision have been made for their recovery? It is enough to know that God, who always does right, has passed them by. They sinned against light and knowledge. Each stood or fell for himself alone. And while the justice of God shall be displayed in their eternal destruction, his goodness is no more impeached than it will be in the punishment of wicked men. In reference to both classes, it may be said, they had a fair trial, but they chose the evil, and must "eat the fruit of their doings."

2. Holy Angels. We come in the next place to inquire concerning holy angels. In reference to them, various items of information may be gained from the Bible.

(1) We speak of their *character* and *condition.*

First. *They are possessed of a high degree of intelligence and wisdom.* In 2 Sam. xiv. 17, we find the woman of Tekoah speaking to David as follows: "As an angel of God, so is my lord the king to *discern* good and bad." Their superior intelligence may be inferred, 1. From their spirituality. They are not clogged by the frailties of weak and perishing bodies. 2. From the place of their abode. They "ever behold the face of God" in glory, and dwell amid the effulgence of heavenly light. 3. From their long observation and experience. For multiplied ages they have been gazing in sweet contemplation on the unfolding attributes of Deity, and winging their unwearied flight to various and distant parts of God's dominions, to execute the divine command, and witness the wonders of the divine administration. To what lofty heights must they be elevated in knowledge and wisdom! Subjects the most mysterious to the strongest intellect of man, may all be spread out to the view of a seraph with the clearness of the light of day.

Second. *They are holy beings.* In Matt. xxv. 31, they are called "the holy angels;" and that they have never departed, in the least, from the path of rectitude, we infer from the petition in the Lord's Prayer: "Thy will be done on earth, *as it is in heaven.*" Again, we infer their holiness from the place of their residence. No unclean thing can enter heaven; but, for at least six thousand years, they have been veiling their faces before the throne, and crying out, with reverential humility, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts."

Third. *They are possessed of great activity and strength.* In Ps. ciii. 20, we read: "Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that *excel in strength.*" It is true they derive all their strength from Jehovah, but he has endued them with astonishing power. The destroying angel smote the first-born in the Egyptian families; and some of the most signal judgments of God have been executed by angelic ministers. Again, with what astonishing velocity, may we suppose, they can transport themselves from world to world! They are represented as flying on wings, and as they are purely spiritual in their nature, we may suppose that they can fly with the velocity of thought. We have an instance of this in the ninth chapter of Daniel. When Daniel commenced his prayer, the angel Gabriel was commanded to fly swiftly from heaven, and ere the supplication was closed, he touched Daniel, "about the time of the evening oblation."

Fourth. *They possess uninterrupted happiness.* This we infer from the holiness of their nature, as well as from their constant communion with God in the climes of bliss. They can have no remorse for the

past, no fearful apprehensions of the future. They drink immortal joys from the pure fount of bliss, and feast forever on the enrapturing visions of the divine glory.

(2) We next inquire concerning their *employment.*

First. *They are used as agents in the affairs of Divine Providence.* In reference to this, Milton has said:

> "Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
> Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep."

An instance of angelic agency in the affairs of Providence is seen in the book of Daniel, x. 13: "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me." But one of the most striking instances of the power of an angelic minister is, perhaps, the destruction of the hosts of Sennacherib, who had defied the living God. 2 Kings xix. 35: "It came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." It has been supposed that this destruction was caused by the pestilential wind so fatal in the East; but if so, the angel was the agent used by Providence in bringing the wind, at the time, as an instrument of death, more terrible than the sword.

Second. *In the next place, holy angels are used as ministering spirits to the saints.*

1. *In revealing to them the divine will.* As instances of this, we have the cases of Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Daniel. The revelation of the prophetic history of the Church was made to St. John, in Patmos, through the ministry of an angel.

2. *They watch over the saints to preserve them from evil.* In Ps. xci. 10, 12, we read: "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his *angels* charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." And in Ps. xxxiv. 7, we read: "The *angel* of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." In Matt. xviii. 10, our Saviour says: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven *their angels* do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Again, in Heb. i. 14, we read: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

The ministry of angels to the saints is fully taught in the above pas-

sages. We are not, however, to infer that they are to preserve the saints from every calamity of life; for afflictions and trials are neces sary for the perfecting of the saints, for the maturing of their graces, and fitting them for glory. But they are about our path continually. They are with us when we sleep and when we are awake, to preserve us from evil, and to encircle us with an invisible wall of protection.

3. *They convey the souls of the saints to the mansions of bliss.* They attend them through life as their guard and protection, commissioned from their heavenly Father, to comfort them in distress, to deliver them from their enemies, and accompany them in all their weary pilgrimage; but when the hour of death arrives, they wait around the expiring saint to bear his spirit home to God. This is beautifully illustrated in Luke xvi. 22: when Lazarus died, it is said, "he was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." We look upon death as a scene of sorrow and distress; but only let the veil that hides from our view the invisible world be removed, and we should see, in the presence of the dying Christian, angelic bands, with the sweet melody of heavenly harps, commingling with the sobs and groans of weeping friends, and softly whispering, "Sister spirit, come away." Truly may we say,

> "The chamber where the good man meets his fate
> Is privileged beyond the common walk
> Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven."

4. But, lastly, *they shall minister to the saints at the last day, when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised.* The Lord "shall send forth his angels with a mighty sound of a trumpet, to gather together his elect" from the four quarters of the earth, and by them shall all the saints "be caught up to meet the Lord in the air."

Much more might be said, but we have given a faint outline of the condition and employment of the angelic intelligences, as revealed in the Scriptures. How noble and exalted a portion are these celestial beings of the wonderful works of the great Creator! How large and extended views must they have of the infinite wisdom and goodness of God! How profound their adoration, and how *increasingly so*, as they continually witness the beautiful developments of love and power in the wide universe of God's creation and providence! How glorious is their employment! Day and night they are fulfilling their Maker's high behests, not as a dull task, but as a sweet and living pleasure. Lord, aid us, that *we* may "do thy will on earth, as the angels do it in heaven!"

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VI.

Question 1. In what sense is *creation* properly understood?
2. How did the pagan philosophers understand it?
3. How is the eternity of matter shown to be absurd?
4. How may the eternity of the world, in its organized state, be disproved?
5. What is the date of creation, according to the Septuagint?
6. What, according to the Hebrew, shown by Bishop Usher?
7. Which chronology is the most probably correct?
8. What philosophical objection is started to the Mosaic date?
9. How may it be refuted?
10. What are the objections to understanding the "six days" mentioned by Moses, *literally?*
11. What are the arguments for the *literal* intepretation?
12. What are the reasons for supposing that the entire creation of God was not included in the account of Moses?
13. What is the reply to these arguments?
14. May we reasonably suppose creation to be *infinite in extent?*
15. Why not?
16. In what two classes may the intelligent creation be embraced?
17. In what sense is the term *angel* to be understood?
18. What *two classes* of angels are there?
19. What is the evidence that there are fallen angels?
20. How is their apostasy accounted for?
21. What is the nature of their being?
22. What is the evidence that they are unhappy?
23. What is their employment?
24. What is the evidence that they may afflict the body?
25. What is the evidence that they afflict and seduce the soul?
26. What is the nature of their destiny?
27. What is the nature of holy angels?
28. What is the evidence of their intelligence?
29. Of their holiness?
30. Of their activity and strength?
31. Of their happiness?
32. What is the evidence of their agency in the affairs of Providence?
33. What is the proof that they are ministering spirits, in making known the divine will?
34. In watching over and preserving the saints from evil?
35. In conveying them home to heaven?
36. In scenes and events of the last day?

CHAPTER VII.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

In theology, divine providence means the care and superintendence God exercises over his creation. There is, perhaps, no doctrine connected with theology more abundantly and explicitly taught in Scripture than the one here proposed. Yet few subjects of revelation are more intricate to common minds, or less understood by the generality of Christians. That there is a divine providence over the affairs of this world, we all believe; and from it the Christian heart derives much of its richest consolations. But how few have clear, distinct, and adequate conceptions of that providence, and of the manner in which it is exercised! Hence we should be admonished of the importance of care and deliberation, that on this difficult and important question we may arrive at scriptural and correct views. But after our utmost research, we must not expect to be able thoroughly to comprehend all the mysteries connected with the subject; for, in our present fallen and imperfect state, it is a theme too profound for our comprehension. What we may know hereafter, we must wait for the developments of the future to unfold. But it is certainly both our duty and our privilege, even in this world, to learn all in our power concerning the ways of God, as exhibited in his works and in his word.

It is interesting to know that among the sages and philosophers of pagan antiquity, some very correct notions were entertained concerning the divine providence. With them it was a favorite saying: "The highest link in nature's chain is fastened to Jupiter's chair." Such language can only be understood as implying that the providential control of the vast fabric of nature is grasped by the hand of the Supreme Divinity.

Several different theories have been advocated in reference to divine providence. Some have so construed the subject as to deny to second causes, as operating through the "laws of nature," as they are termed, any influence whatever; so that God is the only efficient agent in the universe; and the whole system of nature exhibits but a collection of puppets, or lifeless, immobile, and insensate substances, moving only as directly and constantly controlled by the hand of the Creator. This

is fatalism. Others represent the system of nature as one vast and perfect machine which the Deity let fall from his creative hand, with all its parts so well adjusted and so harmoniously connected, that it needs no farther attention from its Maker; but while *he*, after having been an active sovereign in creation, retires forever, a quiescent spectator, the system he has made continues to go on, working out its own results, like a clock wound up at the first, but then left to itself to tell off its hours, minutes, and seconds, and all its fated periods, upon the principles of absolute independency. This, too, is nothing but fatalism, though arrived at by a different route.

Another system teaches that ordinarily nature is left to self-government by her own laws; but that the Creator sometimes interferes, yet only in the case of miracles.

But what we consider the scriptural view differs from all these theories. It allows to all created entities, whether animate or inanimate the possession of all those qualities or powers with which the Creator has endued them. It admits that in those properties and faculties possessed by creatures, and derived from the hand of the Creator, and preserved in being from moment to moment by his providence, there exists a real efficiency, or causative power; but all is superintended by an all-pervading and controlling providence.

Thus inanimate, vegetable, irrational, and rational creation, each has a nature peculiar to itself, and in the divine providence is governed by laws in accordance with that nature. God, who is over nature in his superintending providence, works through the regular channel of second causes, or independent of them, as he may see proper. He can command the winds and the clouds, the fire and the water, the snow and the hail, and cause them to obey him, either by directing the agency of second causes, or independently of that agency. Or he can send his angels as "ministering spirits;" or he can control the minds and hearts of kings and subjects by the agency of his Holy Spirit, and thus manage the machinery of his providence, either through nature's laws or independently of them, so as to secure the results of his will, whether for the detection and punishment of the criminal, or for the deliverance and comfort of the saint.

The entire creation of God, so far as our information extends, is comprised in four classes of substances, or entities. First, *inanimate material substances;* secondly, *living vegetable substances;* thirdly, *irrational animals;* fourthly, *rational accountable moral agents.* As the line distinguishing between these four classes of created things is clearly marked, each class being essentially different from the others, it necessarily fol-

that the principles of the divine government pertaining to each of these several classes of creatures must be accordingly different, so as to be adapted to the nature of the things to be governed. To suppose that God would adopt the same principles of government in reference to things so essentially varied in their nature, as are a clod, a tree, a bird, and a man, would be a palpable impeachment of the divine wisdom. Hence we shall find that while the divine providence in its broad sweep grasps under its control all substances and natures, all entities and beings, yet there is clearly to be seen a wise adaptation of the principles of the divine administration to the nature of the things to be governed. The providence of God is exercised over lifeless matter, living vegetation, irrational animals, and accountable agents, according to the respective nature of each class.

That the divine providence is exercised over every particle of the created universe, may be clearly inferred even from the fact of creation. It has been well said by the great American lexicographer: "He that acknowledges a creation and denies a *providence*, involves himself in a palpable contradiction; for the same power which caused a thing to exist is necessary to continue its existence."

I. The doctrine of a divine providence over *inanimate creation* is taught in such scriptures as the following:—"Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger. Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble. Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars. Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea." Job ix. 5–8. "The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun. Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter." Ps. lxxiv. 16, 17. "He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke." Ps. civ. 32. "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt. v. 45. "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." Isa. xl. 12.

From these, and numerous other scriptures of similar import, it is clearly taught that God extends his ruling providence over all material things—over the heavens and the earth, the mountains and the seas, the day and the night, the summer and the winter, the sun and the stars, the hills and the dust, the sunshine and the rain. But we inquire, Upon what principle, according to what system of laws, does

God exercise this providential control? Upon this question there can be no controversy. All will agree that inanimate creation is not governed by laws adapted to moral agents, irrational animals, or living vegetables; but by such laws as properly belong to lifeless matter. Physical substances are governed by physical laws. It is a principle in natural science, long since too firmly established to be shaken by the wild speculations of modern empirics, that *inertia* is a property of matter. Hence all merely material substances are under the absolute control of resistless force. Matter—lifeless matter—can only move as it is moved. It can only act as it is acted upon. And when acted upon, it must of necessity move in exact conformity to the extent and direction of the force applied. Thus it appears that, in the nature of things, lifeless material substances can be governed by no law but that of physical force. And this influence is of the most absolute and resistless character conceivable. By this force, and upon this principle, the planets revolve, the seasons rotate, the vapor ascends, the rain and the snow fall from above, and the rivers rush to the ocean.

All substances of this material class are said to be governed by the laws of nature; and these laws are considered unchangeable. Hence it is contended by some that there can be no divine providence over the material universe farther than what is the necessary result of the laws of nature. We reserve for another place in this chapter an examination of the position just mentioned, but a few remarks on the subject seem to be appropriate in this connection. When it is said that the laws of nature govern the physical universe, a sense is by many persons attached to the phrase—"laws of nature"—which is not in accordance with the reality of things. It is supposed that the "laws of nature" mean something having an abstract, substantive existence, capable of exerting, independently of any immediate aid from God, a direct, positive, and causative influence. This illusive view of the subject has led many a superficial thinker into the vortex of an insidious skepticism. The first step is to deny any immediate divine agency in the government of material things, and thus put God out of the natural world. The next step is to deny any immediate divine influence upon the minds of intelligent agents, and thus put God out of the moral world. But surely such as reason thus have not stopped to examine their premises! What, we ask, are the "laws of nature?" This phrase cannot mean any thing but *God's method of agency* in the control of nature. A law in itself can exert no independent causative influence on any substance whatever. The "laws of nature," so called, owe their existence to the will and appointment of God; and if their existence,

also the continuance of that existence. The same agency of God which gave these laws their being and influence must still be perpetuated at every step in the processes of nature and throughout every instant of duration, or those laws at once become extinct, and their influence is lost. Hence, to assert that material things are governed by the laws of nature, independently of any immediate influence from God, is the same as to say that they are not governed at all; but that all material things are left adrift upon the wild sea of chaos, without order, system, or control of any kind, or from any source.

From what has been said, the conclusion is inevitable, first, that God's providence controls the material universe; secondly, that this control is by the immediate power and wisdom of God, through the medium of physical agencies, and according to those principles which he has appointed for the exertion of his own power. Hence God governs nature, in all the complicated parts of her vast machinery, even from the mighty globes that roll amid the immensity of space, to the mote that floats in the sunbeam, by his own immediate agency, as really as if no such thing as the "laws of nature" had ever been heard of, or conceived to exist. By his command, (which must be understood as a continuous active influence, rolling on from moment to moment, like an ever-flowing stream,) the sun still shineth in the heavens and "knoweth his going down"—at his bidding "all nature stands, and stars their courses move." What though it be admitted that God, as a general rule, governs nature through the medium of second causes, is his government any the less real on that account? He whose hand holds the topmost link in the vast chain on which universal creation is suspended, supports the immense fabric in all its parts, as really as if the whole were hung upon a single link. As the electric fluid, flying from the battery along the track of ten thousand conductors, derives all its power from its point of departure, so the providential power of God, though it may be exerted through innumerable secondary agencies, is as really the divine power, as if we heard a voice proclaim, from every link in the extended chain, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth to him good."

II. That the divine providence extends also over *vegetable creation*, appears from the following scriptures:—"He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that he may bring forth food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart. The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted." Ps. civ. 14–16. "Consider the lilies

of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field," etc. Matt. vi. 28–30. "And I will cause the shower to come down in his season: there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase." Ezek. xxxiv. 26, 27.

These scriptures, to which many more might be added, clearly set forth the superintending providence of God in reference to the vegetable productions of the earth. Although, as a general rule, the earth yields her fruit as a reward to the hand of industry, yet it is not without the divine blessing being superadded. Neither the grass, nor the lily, nor the corn, can grow or prosper, unless God sends the refreshing rain and the warming sunshine, as well as imparts to the earth her fructifying properties.

But in what manner does the divine providence operate in this department? Here we find a new element introduced in the government of God. Vegetable nature is managed on principles in accordance with vegetable life. And he who made all things, and gave to all substances their peculiar properties, knows how to adjust the principles of his providential control to the nature of the things to which it is applied. While in reference to lifeless matter all things are controlled by mere physical force, in the vegetable kingdom, the peculiar aptitudes and properties of seeds, grasses, and grains, as well as the character of soils and the nature of climates, are all taken into the account; and God exercises his providence through these diversified agencies, and according to the laws he has ordained in reference to each. Yet, amid the operation of all these secondary causes pertaining to vegetable nature, the fruitfulness of the earth is as really dependent upon the gracious providence of God, as was the multiplication of the loaves and fishes upon the power of the Redeemer. The only difference is this: in the one case, the blessing flowed through a miraculous channel; in the other, through the regular channel of nature. But in both cases, all is the result of the divine power exerted according to God's own plan.

III. The next point to be considered is the providence of God in reference to *irrational animals*. This doctrine is recognized in such scriptures as the following:—"The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good." Ps

civ. 21, 27, 28. "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." Ps. cxlv. 15, 16. "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." Matt. vi. 26. "Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat." Job xxxviii. 41. "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry." Ps. cxlvii. 9.

Nothing can be plainer than these passages render the fact, that the beasts of the forest, the fowls of the air, and "every living thing," are dependent upon God's providence for life, and food, and all that they enjoy. They are under the divine watch-care continually, and are preserved and fed by the beneficent hand of their Creator. But in this department of God's dominions is recognized a law, according to which the divine providence operates, which is quite distinct from that observed either in reference to inanimate matter, or to the vegetable creation. As the plant, or the tree, in the scale of created things, rises one step above the clod or the pebble, so does the beast or the bird rise one step above all inanimate and insentient existences. Here we find a class of beings capable of sensation and emotion. Though irrational, they can feel, and are susceptible of enjoyment and of misery. God has endued them with wonderful *instincts*, leading them to self-preservation and the propagation of their kind; and according to the principles of this great law of their nature, he exercises over them his providential superintendency. He governs them, not as stocks and stones, nor yet as plants and trees, but according to the peculiar nature he has given them.

But still they are as dependent upon God's ever-present providence for their preservation, and for their daily food, as if he had given them no instinct, impelling them to fly from danger, and directing them how to seek their appropriate sustenance in those channels which he has prescribed. Instead of sending his angels with food in their hands to place literally in the open mouths of all living animals, as the parent birds feed their young, God having provided a supply in nature's storehouse, directs and aids all the beasts, and birds, and all living animals, by impressing upon them the law of instinct, in the procurement of the food prepared for them by his bounteous providence. The channel through which the benefit is conveyed, being also a merciful arrangement of the Creator, cannot diminish the degree of their dependence upon divine providence. They "all receive their meat from God."

IV. We now call attention to the providence of God, in reference to *mankind as moral accountable agents.*

1. *This doctrine is taught in Scripture.*

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." Prov. xv. 3. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." Prov. xxi. 1. "The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. x. 23. "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." Prov. xvi. 9. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Dan. iv. 35. "His kingdom ruleth over all." Ps. ciii. 19. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 28.

That the doctrine of a divine providence over the affairs of men in this life is taught in the foregoing scriptures, no candid person can dispute; but the important matter to be considered is the sense in which this doctrine should be understood. Hence we proceed more particularly to examine—

2. *The nature of divine providence.*

(1) It is *universal in extent.* It pertains to all things, everywhere, great and small—for, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place." Nothing can escape the surveillance of his all-pervading providence. It embraces the angels in heaven, as well as men upon earth. It extends to our very *being;* for in him we "have our being." It embraces our *lives;* for "in him we live." It embraces our *actions;* for "in him we move." *We* may devise and plan, but the Lord "directeth our steps." It pertains alike to great and small things. It rules over empires and kingdoms: "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another." Ps. lxxv. 6, 7. It regards things the most minute, and apparently insignificant; for our Saviour says, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." Matt. x. 29, 30.

(2) It is *special in its application.* This is not only clearly inferable from the scriptures already adduced, but numerous exemplifications of the principle are recorded in the Bible.

We see it in the case of Joseph. His brethren had wickedly sold him into Egypt; but God, in his good providence, while he permitted this sinful act, accompanied the young man in all his fortunes in the land of strangers. Hence Joseph says to his brethren: "But as for

you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." Gen. l. 20.

We see a special interposition of providence clearly manifest in the case of Elijah. When hungry in the wilderness, by a direct providence of God he was fed by the ravens. And again, when fleeing from the face of his persecutors, and resting under the shade of a juniper-tree, his refreshments were furnished him by the hand of an angel. Thus we might speak of Samuel and David, of Daniel and Jeremiah, of Peter and John, of Paul and Silas, and hosts of others; for the Bible is replete with the record of the divine interposition in behalf of God's people.

But the attempt is made to set all these Bible instances aside, on the ground that they were *miraculous*. It is argued that God may exert a special providence in the case of miracles, but that we have no right to expect it in ordinary affairs. Our *first* reply to this objection is, that although some of the instances referred to were properly miraculous, yet they were not all of that character. We see in the history of Joseph nothing but the regular workings of providence through the channels of nature. Our second reply is, that numerous instances of the manifest care of a special providence are given in Scripture, in which there is no evidence of any thing miraculous. Our third reply is, that we have already shown, from numerous explicit declarations of Scripture, that divine providence regards all things and all events, whether great or small, whether ordinary or miraculous.

3. We next examine the *principles* according to which divine providence is exercised over intelligent human agents.

First, we inquire, Is this providence *particular*, or only *general*? Under this question is presented the great difficulty in regard to this subject. Dr. Webster has sensibly remarked that "some persons admit a *general providence*, but deny a *particular providence*, not considering that a *general providence* consists of *particulars*." In accordance with the position here so clearly stated by our renowned lexicographer, we will now proceed to prove that the providence of God is not only *general*, but *particular*.

(1) To admit a *general*, but to deny a *particular*, providence, is a palpable adoption of *infidel principles*. The Bible, as already clearly shown, most explicitly teaches a *particular* providence. Hence we can only deny that doctrine by a wholesale rejection of the Scriptures. That avowed infidels should scoff at a *particular* providence, is what we might reasonably expect. It is in perfect consistency with their "creed of unbelief." But that professed Christians, with the open Bible in

their hands, should thus shamelessly espouse a principle so flatly contradictory to the express teachings of the inspired word, is truly marvelous.

(2) This denial of a *particular* providence, while admitting a *general* providence, is *unphilosophical*. Ask the abettors of this theory what they mean by a *general* providence without *particulars*, and they can give you no definite or consistent answer. They may expatiate about the "laws of nature," or the necessary connection between "cause and effect;" but urge them to define their terms, and they are driven into "confusion worse confounded." To talk of a *general* providence without *particulars*, is as senseless and unmeaning as to speak of an extended chain without separate links. Just as the links make the chain, and as there can be no chain without the separate links, so do *particulars* make the *general* providence; and there can be no *general* providence without the distinct *particulars*. In any concatenated connection of causes and effects, where the first cause produces the first effect, and that first effect becomes the second cause producing the second effect, and so on to the end of the concatenation—in any such case as this, the first cause acts efficiently all along the concatenated line, and is as really causative of the last effect as of the first. Hence, if God governs the world by a *general* providence reaching through the connected chain of causes and effects, or, in other words, through all that harmonious system styled the "laws of nature," it necessarily follows that his government extends alike to all parts of the system; and if *general*, it must be *particular*, and can be no more the one than the other.

But perhaps an objector may say that, according to this principle of reasoning, Then God, the first great cause, is the only real agent in the universe, and must be the responsible author of all things, even of the sinful actions of men. We reply, that a superficial and hasty reasoner may so conclude; and thus has originated the infidel scheme of philosophic necessity, and the unscriptural dogma of Calvinistic predestination. But no one who will be at the pains to consider with care the method of the divine government and providence, in reference to the different classes of things the Creator has made, and over which he exercises dominion, need allow himself to drift into this vortex of error and delusion. But this leads us to show that—

(3) The denial of a *particular* providence, or the assumption that it involves the doctrine of necessity, is repugnant to the *principles of the divine administration in reference to intelligent moral agents*, as set forth in the Scriptures.

To infer that the doctrine of necessity, making God the author of

sin, results from the view of a particular providence which we have taken, is to assume that God governs moral agents just as he governs inanimate matter. But this assumption is both unphilosophical and unscriptural.

First, it is *unphilosophical.* The wisdom, goodness, and all the attributes of the divine Being, must lead him to superintend all the substances and beings he has created, according to the properties with which he has endued them. He must control matter as matter, and spirit as spirit. He must govern a block, a plant, an insect, and a man, each according to its respective nature. How he governs inanimate matter, vegetable nature, and irrational animals, has already been considered. But shall we conclude that a God of infinite perfections will govern man, with all his exalted powers—made only "a little lower than the angels"—by the same system of laws by which he governs the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the hyssop upon the wall, or the pebbles of the brook? Such a conclusion would be most unphilosophical.

But it would be also *unscriptural.* The Bible sets forth that man, being a moral agent, is governed by a system of moral laws. To suppose that God cannot govern man as really by moral laws as he controls the material universe by physical laws, would be an impeachment of his attributes. His government is as real in the one case as in the other, though conducted on different principles. Blocks and pebbles being inert matter, capable of moving only as they are moved, are governed absolutely and irresistibly by physical force. But man, being an intelligent moral agent, capable of reasoning, of understanding the distinction between right and wrong, of feeling the power of conscience and the influence of motives, and of appreciating reward and punishment, is governed by moral laws, commanding what is right, and prohibiting what is wrong. In the one case, there being no moral agent involved, all is necessary and absolute. In the other case, moral agents being concerned, the government is modified in its administration, according to the contingency of human actions. Yet, in the government of man by moral laws, the divine administration is as firm and as unswerving from its principles as are the laws of nature. It is no more certain that water will seek its level, or that fire will burn, than it is that "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." In the one case, material substances are governed by a changeless physical law; in the other, moral agents by a moral gospel statute; but in both cases, the administration is fixed with equal firmness upon its own unswerving basis.

It may be admitted that God's method of extending his providential superintendency to every act of moral agents, so as to "leave free the human will," and not affect human responsibility, is profoundly mysterious. But is not the government of God over the material world—managing the seas, wheeling the clouds, directing the tornado, feeding the young ravens when they cry, and not allowing a sparrow to fall without his leave, (and all this without obstructing the laws of nature,)—is not this, we demand, a mystery equally beyond our grasp? But these truths being plainly taught in the Bible, we are bound to admit them, or be overwhelmed by the muddy waters of skepticism.

But while the providence of God extends its sway wide as creation over all the works of his hands, yet we should ever remember that this superintendency is *so* exercised, that while God is the author of all good—"the Father of lights," from whom "cometh down every good gift, and every perfect gift"—yet he is not the author of sin, but only by his providence *permits* it—that is, he does not coercively prevent it, and thus destroy man's moral agency. But even in reference to the sinful acts of men, this providence is so exercised as to bring good out of evil. Thus the Psalmist says: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Ps. lxxvi. 10.

V. But let us, in conclusion, glance at the *difficulties* in which we shall be involved, if we deny the doctrine of a particular providence.

1. Discard this doctrine, and on what principle can we see any *ground for prayer?* We are commanded to ask God for all the blessings we need, whether temporal or spiritual, with the promise that our petitions, when offered aright in the name of Jesus, shall be heard and answered. But if God exercises no particular providence over the things of this world, to pray to him for these blessings would be solemn mockery. Upon that supposition, how could we consistently pray, "Give us this day our daily bread"? Again, deny a particular providence, and what meaning can we attach to such scriptures as these:—"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry"? Jas. v. 16; Ps. xxxiv. 15.

The Bible is replete with commands to pray, accompanied by the promise that our prayers shall be heard and answered. It also records numerous instances of direct answers to prayer. Deny a particular providence, and these scriptures are all perfectly inexplicable.

Assume that God, after having created the world, impressed upon it what philosophers term "the laws of nature," and then retired within himself, leaving nature and her laws to control all things as best they

could, not concerning himself by the exercise of any particular providence over the world, and who that believes the position could ever ask God for a single blessing? But, what is far worse, were God for a single moment to withdraw his providential hand from creation, universal nature would instantly rush into chaotic ruin, or sink back into nonentity. For he who created all things, "upholdeth all things by the word of his power." "By him all things consist." In a word, to pray to a God without a providence, would be as absurd as to invoke the senseless rocks or mountains. But, on the other hand, admit that God, though unseen by mortal eye, is everywhere present, swaying the scepter of his providence over every portion of his vast dominions, and what abundant reason have we to look to him in prayer for every thing we need!

2. If the doctrine of a particular providence be discarded, what ground can there be for *thanksgiving to God*, or for *trust in him?* How can we thank him for the food we receive, the raiment we put on, or the rest we enjoy? Or how can we put our trust in him, as our preserver or protector? Job exclaims: "Though he slay me, yet will I *trust* in him." Did *he* believe in a God without a special providence? David says: "In God have I put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me." How could *he* look for help from God, except by his special providence?

3. Again, how rich are the *consolations* which the pious in all ages have derived from their reliance on God's providential care! David says: "The children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." Ps. xxxvi. 7. And again: "The Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Ps. lxxxiv. 11. God, by the mouth of Isaiah, promises: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Isa. xliii. 2. And St. Paul affirms: "All things work together for good to them that love God." Rom. viii. 28.

Tear away from the Christian his confidence in the ever-abiding presence of God, and in the watchful care of his providence, and you rob him of his firmest support amid the trials and conflicts of life. It was this which inspired the ancient prophets, apostles, and martyrs, with courage to defy the menaces and persecutions of all their foes; which nerved the heart of Luther to stand so firm amid the raging storm that surrounded him; and which enabled Wesley, with his expiring breath, to exclaim: "The best of all is, God is with us!"

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VII.

QUESTION 1. What is the *definition* of divine providence in theology?

2. In what *four general classes* is the creation of God considered?

3. Is the line of distinction between these classes *clearly marked?*

4. Is the divine government the same in reference to *each class?*

5. What *scriptures* set forth the divine providence over *inanimate creation?*

6. Upon what *principles*, in this department, is the divine providence exercised?

7. What scriptures exhibit the divine providence in reference to *vegetable nature?*

8. According to what *law* is this providence exercised?

9. What scriptures prove the divine providence in reference to *irrational animals?*

10. In what *manner* is this providence exercised?

11. What scriptures show that divine providence extends to *mankind as moral agents?*

12. What is the *first item* named as characteristic of this providence, and what *scriptures* prove it?

13. What is the second item, and how is it proved?

14. How are the *principles* of this providence illustrated?

15. Is it *particular*, or only *general?*

16. By what arguments is a particular providence sustained?

17. In what *difficulties* are we involved, if we deny a particular providence?

PART I.—DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK II.—DOCTRINES RELATING TO MAN.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PRIMEVAL STATE OF MAN.

After the Creator had formed the inferior parts of sublunary creation, man, the most exalted and noble being of earth, was next produced. Referring to the series of beings produced by the Creator, a learned author has remarked: "Yet, near the top of the series, we meet with a being whose physical organization is the perfected antitype of all other animals; who subjects all others to his sway, and converts even the fiercest elements into servants, placed at once upon the earth as the crown of all. What a stretch of credulity does it demand to explain this wonderful phenomenon irrespective of divine miraculous power! On this last and grandest act of creation, God hath impressed the signet of his wisdom and might so deeply that skepticism tries in vain to deface it. Man's creation, as taught by geology, rises up as a lofty monument of miraculous intervention in nature, beating back the waves of unbelief, and reflecting afar the divine wisdom and glory." (Hitchcock.)

In the investigation of man's character and condition, several points of interest present themselves to our view.

1. *His nature was twofold—material* and *immaterial;* or, in other words, he had a body and a soul. His body was "formed of the dust of the ground;" and was material, like the earth whence it was taken. But his soul was immaterial; in this respect, like the God from whom it proceeded.

The question has been asked, Whether the soul of man was properly created, or was it merely an *emanation* from the Deity? The former

opinion is more in accordance with the Scriptures, and more generally adopted. To suppose that the soul was not created, in the proper sense of the word, would be to deny that man was a created being; for the soul is the most important part of his nature. Nay, more, it would be to deny the real existence of the soul altogether; for if it was not created, then it must be a part of God; but God is infinite, without parts, and indivisible; therefore the idea is absurd in itself. But could we free the position from absurdity in that sense, difficulty would meet us from another quarter. The souls of the ungodly are to be punished with "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord;" consequently they cannot be a spark of the divine nature. The conclusion, then, is clear, that we must either admit that God created the soul of man out of nothing, or deny its real existence altogether.

2. *In the divine image.* The inspired delineation of the primitive character of man is, that he was "in the image, and after the likeness, of God." We proceed, therefore, to inquire more particularly in what that "image or likeness" consisted.

No theory ever advanced upon this subject is, perhaps, more absurd than that which refers this image to the body. "God is a Spirit," without bodily shape or parts, and therefore the body of man could not, as such, be in the divine image.

Others have made this image to consist in the dominion given to man over the works of creation; but this notion is refuted by the fact that man received this dominion after he had been created; whereas, he was *made* in the image of God.

In endeavoring to ascertain in what this image consisted, we cannot fix upon one single quality, and say that it consisted in that alone, but we shall find several particulars in which it consisted.

(1) *Spirituality* is the first we shall name. God is called "the Father of spirits," doubtless in allusion to man's resemblance to his Creator in the spirituality of his nature. In Acts xvii. 29, we read: "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."

The argument of the apostle here is evidently based upon man's resemblance to God in spirituality. The argument is this: as man is a spiritual being, if he is the offspring of God, then God must be a spiritual being; consequently the Godhead cannot be a material substance "like unto gold, or silver, or stone." Although there is this resemblance in spirituality, yet we cannot say that the spiritual essence of Deity is not vastly superior, in refinement and purity, to that of the

most exalted creature. But the comprehension of a spiritual essence transcends our utmost powers.

(2) *Knowledge* is the next particular in which we shall notice that this image consisted. This we prove from Col. iii. 10, reading as follows: "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Here is a plain allusion to the image of God in which man was originally made. Upon this passage Macknight adds these words: "Even as, in the first creation, God made man after his own image." In respect to the degree of knowledge with which man was originally endued, commentators have widely differed. Some have represented him, in this respect, almost in a state of infancy, having nearly every thing to learn; while others have exalted him almost, if not altogether, to angelic perfection. The probable truth lies between the two extremes. That man was inferior, in this respect, to the angels, we may infer from the testimony of Paul: he was made "a little *lower* than the angels." That his knowledge was exceedingly great, we may infer from the purity and perfection of his nature. Moral evil had not deranged and enervated his powers, or enshrouded him in darkness. We may also very naturally be led to the same conclusion, from his history in paradise; his readiness in naming appropriately the various animals presented before him, and his capability of holding converse with his Maker.

(3) *Holiness*, or moral purity, is the next and the most important part of this image of God which we shall notice. In Eph. iv. 24, we read: "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Here the renewal of our moral nature, which in the Scriptures generally is represented as a recovery from the polluting consequences of sin, is said to be "after God," that is, after the image of God; and this image is said to consist in "righteousness and true holiness." That man originally possessed absolute and essential holiness, independent of God, we do not believe. None but God, the fountain of holiness, can possess this quality in an independent and supreme sense. Man, therefore, derived holiness from his immediate connection and direct communion with God. That such was his condition, we may confidently infer from this very fact of his communion with his God. It is also clearly implied in the sentence of absolute approval pronounced by the Creator upon his works. They were said to be "very good." Such they could not have been, if unholiness, in the least degree, attached to any of them. He who is infinitely holy himself, could not, consistently with his nature, have produced an unholy creature. The stream must partake of the nature of the

fountain Therefore, man was created, in the moral sense, "without spot or wrinkle."

(4) *Immortality* is the last thing we shall notice in which this image consisted. This we understand to apply to the body as well as the soul of man. It relates to his entire compound nature. That man never would have died but for the introduction of sin, is the irresistible conclusion from the reasoning of St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, where he shows that "death entered into the world by sin." Again, it is implied in the original penalty of the law: "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Most certainly the promise is here implied that if he continued in obedience he should live. With these direct testimonies to man's original immortality before us, we can feel no inclination to dispute with those who contend that man would have died literally, whether he had sinned or not. If men choose to amuse themselves with their own fancies, in direct opposition to the plainest Scripture, we will leave them to the enjoyment of the pleasing reverie.

Again, we may clearly infer that immortality was a part of the image of God in which man was created, from Gen. ix. 6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man." Now, as the heinousness of the crime of murder results from the fact that man was made in the image of God, that image must have consisted, in part, in immortality, or we cannot see the force of the reasoning.

Some have adopted the idea that the body of man was created naturally mortal, but that this natural tendency to dissolution, by a wise arrangement, was counteracted by means of the "tree of life." We confess we cannot see the scriptural authority, or the force of the reasoning, by which this theory is sustained. Even admitting that the tree of life was the medium through which God was pleased to continue the existence of man, it would not follow that he was naturally mortal, unless the terms be taken in a different acceptation from any in which they are ever used in application to man. What, I would ask, are we to understand by the natural qualities of man? Are they not those qualities belonging to his nature by the arrangement of his Creator? And if so, was not man secured in the possession of the immortality of his nature as absolutely, upon the supposition that the tree of life was the medium, as he could have been in any other way? And will it not result from this that his immortality is just as natural, if secured through that channel, as it could be if derived from any other source? None but God can possess immortality independently.

The continuance of the existence of the soul of man, yea, even the

being of angels, is just as dependent on the will, and results as really from the power of God, as the immortality of man's body could have done, supposing it to have been secured by the tree of life. Whether the divine power by which the perpetuity of our existence is secured be exerted through the medium of the tree of life, or in any other way, it is no less really the power of God. Hence it would follow that, even upon this supposition, the body of man was just as naturally immortal as his soul could have been. But is not the idea that the body of man originally was *by nature* mortal, antagonistic to the general tenor of Scripture on this subject, that "*death* is the wages of *sin?*" I cannot but think that the more scriptural comment upon the "tree of life" would be to say that it was rather a seal or pledge of the clearly implied promise of God that man, a being created naturally immortal, should, upon the condition of obedience, be continued in that state. Be this as it may, the point is clear that man was made immortal, according to the will and power of God; and this, in part, constituted the divine image in which he was made.

Man's immortality may be inferred from the *analogy of God's works.*

Look upon man—what is he? He is the highest link, so far as known to us independently of revelation, in the vast chain of beings throughout creation. He is the head and ruler over all the creatures of God; and, as shown by numerous testimonies in all ages, he is the object of the peculiar care and regard of his Maker. Along-side with man are all created things else; and over them is extended the dominion and providence of God, controlling all in reference to the accommodation and good of man. And yet, from age to age, all physical nature stands secure on its basis, shining on in undiminished strength, and beauty, and glory; while man, the highest, the noblest, the most exalted of all God's creatures, if he be not immortal, is doomed to a transitory existence, for no apparent good purpose, and then to fade from the universe as "a dream when one awaketh."

All nature, man excepted, seems to occupy an appropriate position and to contribute to a desirable end. But man, for whom "all nature stands, and stars their courses move," appears to be out of place, and existing for no assignable good reason, and contributing to no worthy and appropriate end. Weak and imperfect, depraved and polluted, yet full of sublime aspirations and immortal hopes, he "fleeth as a shadow," and is gone. As he feels that his powers are just beginning to unfold, he is struck down by death in his career; and plans and enterprises, joys and sorrows, in one moment are extinguished forever.

Can we suppose that all this mass of aimless, capricious, incoherent,

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incongruous results, has been contrived and produced by the God of infinite wisdom and goodness? The position is too appalling to be entertained. But if we view this life as but a stepping-stone to the next—as but the opening scene to an endless career—a probation, a school of discipline, in reference to an endless hereafter; with this view of the subject, the clouds are dispersed—man appears in his true character, and a flood of light is poured upon his duty and destiny, while the perfections of God are displayed in his history.

Thus have we seen that this image of God, in which man was created, embraced *spirituality*, *knowledge*, *holiness*, and *immortality*.

3. The last thing which we shall notice, in reference to the primeval state of man, is that *he was constituted happy*.

Formed an intellectual and spiritual essence, endued with rational faculties capable of lofty and holy exercise, and admitted into social intercourse and intimate communion with God, he shared the blessing of pure and uninterrupted felicity. Placed in a world where all was order, harmony, and beauty—exempt from all infirmity or affliction of body, and conscious of no imbecility or imperfection of soul—he was permitted, with undisturbed freedom of body and mind, and conscious innocence and rectitude of heart, to range the garden of paradise, where opening flowers and unfolding beauties, sweetest odors and richest melodies, proclaimed in heavenly accent, to the eye, the ear, and every sense of man, that God, his Maker, had formed him for happiness.

Thus have we faintly sketched the condition in which our race was originally placed by the Creator. Our first parents were holy and happy. Placed as man was in a garden of delights, where all was beauty, freshness, fragrance, and music, how could he have one want? Created with high capabilities of acquiring knowledge, how well rewarded would be all his inquiries! Made holy, loving God with all his soul, how sweet to him was communion with the Father of his spirit! Every act was worship; for no sin was there. As he gazed enraptured on the vaulted firmament, studded with glittering worlds, or sat in the soft light of the moon, or walked forth in the softer twilight, no doubt his soul ascended in silent or speaking gratitude to Him who had fitted up for his children so beautiful an abode. When the light of day appeared in the east, and the songs of morning burst upon his ear, man's heart would be attuned to worship, and the bowers of paradise would resound with the notes of his grateful praise. Thus the recurrence of day and night would alike bring seasons of holy devotion. With what delighted anticipation would he look forward to the periods

set apart for communion with the Holy One! He noted not the slow-moving of the hours, for he knew no suffering, no grief; he hid not his face and wept, for as yet he knew no sin. But, alas, he fell from this glorious estate! He "forsook the fountain of living waters" and turned to an impure stream. In an evil hour he listened to the voice of the tempter; and sweet must have been his charming to cause man to forget the voice of his Father, God, saying to him, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die!"

Let us now, in conclusion, take a general survey of the material and intellectual universe, as spoken into being by the omnific fiat of Jehovah. What, we ask, was the grand object of God in calling into being this stupendous fabric of creation? It could not have been requisite for the promotion of his own essential happiness, for he was perfectly and independently happy in the possession of his own inimitable perfections. The great moving principle in the Deity, which resulted in the work of creation, we are led to believe, from all that we know of the divine character and administration, was benevolence, or love. He designed to exhibit his own perfections, and to show forth his own declarative glory, in the happiness of millions of intelligent existences. Infinite wisdom saw that happiness would be promoted by creation; infinite love delighted in this noble end; and infinite power spoke the word, and a universe appeared in being. Myriads of sentient existences have thus been permitted to taste the streams of bliss, and all that fill the station assigned them may rejoice forever in ascriptions of praise to Him "in whom they live, and move, and have their being."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VIII.

QUESTION 1. What was man's primeval twofold nature?
2. Was his soul created *out of nothing?*
3. In what did the divine image, in which man was created, consist?
4. What is the evidence that it embraced *spirituality?*
5. That it embraced *knowledge?*
6. That it embraced *holiness?*
7. That it embraced *immortality?*
8. Did this immortality apply also to the *body?*
9. Was the body created *naturally* immortal?
10. What may we suppose was the design of the "tree of life?"
11. What is the evidence that man was originally *happy?*
12. What was the grand *design* of God in producing creation?

CHAPTER IX

THE FALL OF MAN—THE DIVINE ADMINISTRATION VINDICATED.

THE Bible is a rich treasury of historic truth. In the first chapter of Genesis, we read an account of our own origin, and of the birth of creation. But scarcely have we time to pause and contemplate the beauty and grandeur of the handiwork of the Supreme Architect, till we are led by the inspired record to look upon one of the most melancholy scenes ever presented to the view of man. In the third chapter of Genesis, we are furnished with the history of the fall of man —the apostasy of the first pair from original purity and happiness. The Mosaic account of this event is substantially this: That man was placed in the garden of Eden to dress and to keep it. In this garden were two peculiar trees—the one called "the tree of life," and the other "the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Of the fruit of the latter, Adam was commanded not to eat, and the command was enforced by the announcement of the penalty—"In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Through the temptation of the serpent, Eve, and, through her, Adam, were induced to disobey the command, by eating the fruit of that tree, in consequence of which they were expelled from the garden, and the sentence of death, together with other maledictions, was denounced against them.

I. In turning our attention to this scriptural account of the Fall, we inquire, first, Is this a *literal account* of events that really took place, or is it merely an *allegorical representation?* Infidels, who reject the Bible, of course look upon it as nothing but a fictitious story; but that professed Christians should view this solemn record as a painted allegory, is a matter of no little surprise; and yet some, at the same time that they express a reverence for the Bible, make thus free with its contents.

That this history should be interpreted literally, we infer, first, from the fact that it is regularly connected with a continuous and plain narrative detail of facts. Now, to select from a regularly conducted narrative a particular portion as allegorical, when all the other parts in the connection are admitted to be plain narrative, is contrary to all the

rules of interpretation. If we may make thus free with the third chapter of Genesis, why not the first, and deny the reality of the creation? Why not make a similar disposition of the history of Noah, of Moses, or even of Christ? Indeed, if we are authorized to treat the plain historic record of the Bible thus unceremoniously, we can place little confidence in any thing it contains.

But there is a second argument for the literal interpretation of the account under consideration. If we view it as an allegory, we must set aside the authority of the New Testament; for in several places it alludes to the history of the Fall as a real transaction. In Matt. xix. 4, 5, our Saviour says: "Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female; and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh?" Here, although our Lord does not quote immediately from the history of the Fall, yet he quotes a portion of the same continuous narrative; consequently he must have viewed it as real history. In 2 Cor. xi. 3, St. Paul says: "But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Here the allusion is so plain, that we cannot resist the conviction that the apostle intended to refer to a real transaction.

But there is another passage so positive and definite as to settle the question with all who will acknowledge the inspiration of St. Paul:—1 Tim. ii. 13, 14: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression." Thus do we perceive that we are compelled to admit the literal history of the fatal lapse of man, as recorded in the third chapter of Genesis, or discard our confidence in the Bible.

II. In the second place, we inquire concerning *the propriety of the divine administration, as connected with the circumstances of the fall of man.*

1. It is asked, Could not the Almighty, who certainly foresaw the apostasy of man, *have prevented it?* And if so, how can we reconcile it with divine goodness that he did not thus interpose? I am persuaded that this difficulty has not only been tauntingly urged by the infidel, but it has presented itself to the mind of many a candid inquirer after truth; therefore it merits some serious consideration.

In the first place, that God foresaw the Fall, we firmly believe; for he seeth "the end from the beginning."

In the second place, that he could have prevented it, we freely admit; for God can do any thing which does not imply an absurdity, and which

is consistent with his own perfections. We do not suppose that Deity was necessarily compelled to create man originally. The fact that he did not perform this work till a few thousand years ago, is sufficient evidence that he might have suspended it even till now, had he seen proper. If, then, he was not compelled to create man at first, but acted with perfect freedom, it would follow that he might still continue to exercise the same freedom, and unmake what he had made, or so change it as to constitute it something entirely different. So far, then, as the simple question of potentiality is concerned, the Deity could have prevented the Fall. He could have prevented it by omitting to create man. He could have prevented it by making man a stock, or a stone, or any thing else, besides a moral agent. But that he could have prevented it, consistently with his own attributes, without destroying the moral agency of man, is what we believe never can be proved. Seeing, then, that the only way by which God could have rendered the apostasy of man impossible, was not to have made him a moral and accountable agent, the question then amounts to this: Was it better, upon the whole, that moral agents should be brought into being, or not?

Before the divine administration can be impeached, as improper or inconsistent with goodness, it must be shown either that it was improper to create moral agents, or that the possibility of transgressing is not essential to the character of a moral agent. That it was improper to create moral agents, is a position contradicted by the fact that God did create such beings. This must be admitted by all who acknowledge their own existence, and that they have been brought into being by a Creator, whether they believe the Bible or not. Therefore we are compelled to admit that, in the judgment of God, who alone is infinitely wise and capable of surveying the whole ground, more good than evil would result from the creation of intelligent, accountable beings; and that therefore it was better, upon the whole, that such beings should be created.

In the next place, that the possibility of apostasy is essential to the character of a moral and accountable agent, is easily shown in the following manner: 1. A moral agent implies a capacity for performing moral action. 2. Moral action implies a law by which its character is determined. 3. A law for the government of moral action must necessarily be such as may either be obeyed or disobeyed by the subject; otherwise there can be no moral quality, no virtue or vice, no praise or blame, attached to obedience or disobedience; and this would destroy the character of the moral agent. Thus it is clear that the power to

obey or disobey is essential to the character of a moral agent; consequently God could not have prevented the possibility of the apostasy and fall of man without destroying his moral agency.

2. The *nature of the prohibition* made to Adam has been considered by some as a ground of serious complaint against the divine administration. That the fruit of one of the trees of paradise should be interdicted by the Almighty, has been represented as absurd, and treated with ridicule. This solemn transaction has been made the subject of many "a fool-born jest" by the captious and profane. It would be well for short-sighted and fallible creatures, before they launch forth with such presumptuous arrogance and audacious raillery, with much humility and honesty of heart, more carefully to examine so serious a matter.

In reference to this prohibition, it may be observed that the objection is not that man was placed under a law—the propriety of this, all who acknowledge that he was constituted a moral agent must admit; but the ground of complaint is against the peculiar character of the law. "What harm could there be in eating an apple," it is asked, "that our first parents should be placed under so strict and unreasonable a restraint?"

To this we reply that we can see no just reason for complaint, because the prohibition was what has been termed, not a *moral*, but a *positive* precept. The chief difference in these is, that the reason of a positive precept is not seen by us, whereas, in a moral precept, we perceive, in the very nature of the command, something of its propriety.

In reference to moral precepts, it must be admitted that the reasonableness of the duty is not in every case equally obvious. May we not therefore infer that, in positive precepts, a sufficient reason for them may exist in the mind of God, which, in consequence of the weakness of our understanding, we cannot perceive? That our minds do not perceive the reason upon which a command is founded, cannot possibly be an evidence that no such reason exists, with any who admit the finiteness of the human understanding. Therefore to object to the prohibition as unreasonable, merely because we do not perceive the reason upon which it is founded, is seen to be fallacious.

Again, even were we to admit that there was no previous reason, in the nature of things, for the particular precept given to Adam, and that another precept might just as well have been substituted for it, how can we see any valid objection to the divine administration upon this supposition? Is not the ground of all obligation, whether connected

with a positive or moral precept, founded upon *the will of God?* For instance, the duty of industry is said to be moral in its character, because we can perceive some propriety in it, even in the absence of a command. But is it not clear that our obligation to be industrious is founded upon the command of God? In the absence of the known will of God in the case, I might be led, from mere choice or policy, to the exercise of industry, but I could not feel that I was bound to be industrious, and that a failure would be a crime. Hence we conclude that, as obligation rests not on the *nature* of the duty itself, but on the fact that our Creator has commanded it, the obligation to obey is just as great in a positive as in a moral precept.

In turning our attention to the law given to our first parents, so far from discovering any thing objectionable in the particular prohibition, we confess that it appears to us more reasonable and better adapted to the grand design for which it was given, than a moral precept could have been. It is evident that the law was given as a test of man's fidelity and allegiance to God. He was created an intelligent being, and endued with free agency. As such, a law calculated to test his submission to God was perfectly suited to his condition, being designed to show forth, in the obedience of the creature, the supreme authority and glory of the Creator.

The question for us to determine, therefore, is this: Was a positive precept, such as was given to man, calculated to test his obedience? It appears evident to us, that such a command as had nothing to influence its observance but the authority of God, was, of all that could have been given, the best test of obedience. Had the Almighty commanded Adam to speak the truth, or to be affectionate to his wife, his observance of a moral precept of this kind could not have been a proof of his allegiance to his Maker, for the simple reason that the understanding, unimpaired by sin, might have discovered such propriety and fitness in the very nature of the precept as to lead to obedience merely for the sake of its advantages. But God designed that man should acknowledge the supreme authority of his Creator; therefore he gave him a law affording no argument for its observance but the authority of God, that it might thus be evinced that if man kept the law, he did it for no other reason than because God had commanded it; thereby acknowledging the divine government and control under which he was placed.

Again, the propriety of this precept, when considered as a *test* of obedience, may be seen in its simplicity. A law upon which so much depended, should be such as could easily be understood and remembered. Had an extended system of intricate forms been laid down, the

offending subject might have pleaded as an excuse the difficulty of remembering or understanding every part of the command; but here there can be no plea of the sort—there is but one simple command: the fruit of one tree is interdicted, and that so specifically designated that there can be no mistake.

Once more: had the command imposed a heavy burden upon man, the offending subject might have pleaded as a paliation the severity of the requisition; but here we see no difficult task imposed. It is only abstinence from one out of the many trees of Eden; and the very manner in which the command is issued seems strongly to urge obedience, by a direct allusion to the divine goodness intermingled therewith: "*Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat;* but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." How appropriate this, as a test of obedience! It has nothing but the divine authority to sustain it. It imposes no oppressive burden; but, in its very presentation, is mingled with love.

3. The *circumstances* of the temptation have been caricatured with no sparing hand by men who have appeared determined to amuse themselves at all hazards. A little attention to this subject will be enough, we think, to satisfy the unprejudiced that there is no just ground here for arraigning the divine administration.

Some have thought it strange that God should permit man to be tempted at all. But a temptation to fall, either internal or external, seems to be essential to his character as a probationer. When every inducement is on the side of obedience, the subject must partake of the character of a machine, and there can be no reward for obedience. Perhaps there was this difference between the apostasy of man and that of the fallen angels—the latter originated the temptation within their own nature, whilst the former was tempted from without. It is not essential from what source the temptation originates, but a temptation appears to be necessarily connected with a state of trial. Without it, "what proof can be given of firm allegiance?" As it is impossible for us to know that man would not have originated a temptation within his own nature, even if Satan had not been permitted to attack him, we cannot assail the divine administration as cruel for permitting that attack. Of this much we may be well assured—the temptation was not irresistible. God required obedience; and he gave ability for the same. To have gone farther, would have destroyed the accountability of man, and deranged the principles of the divine government.

Against the *literal* account of the temptation, it has been said that it

is unreasonable to suppose that a "serpent," or any "beast of the field," should be sufficiently malicious and sagacious to undertake and succeed in the seduction of man. It is a sufficient reply to this to know that, according to the Scriptures, the prime actor in this temptation was Satan, a fallen spirit. This we learn from various allusions. In Rev. xii. 9, we read of "that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan." And in evident allusion to the seduction of man, we read concerning the devil, in John viii. 44: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth."

If an objection be made from the absurdity or impossibility of a serpent or beast of the field uttering articulate sounds, we reply, that although such creatures may not naturally possess this power, yet it is impossible for us to prove that God might not permit Satan to exercise it through them; and so the objection falls.

Again, it has been objected that the serpent, of all animals, is the most inappropriate to be selected as the instrument of this seduction. To which we reply that we know but little with regard to what the serpent originally was; but, from what the Scriptures inform us, we have good reason to believe that he was the most appropriate animal that could have been selected. He was not a creeping reptile, but a "beast of the field," and the most subtle among them.

Upon this subject Mr. Watson says: "We have no reason at all to suppose, as it is strangely done almost uniformly by commentators, that this animal had the serpentine form, in any mode or degree at all, before his transformation. That he was then degraded to a reptile to go 'upon his belly,' imports, on the contrary, an entire alteration and loss of the original form—a form of which it is clear no idea can now be conceived."

We may conclude from what has been said, that as a temptation of some kind was necessary to test the fidelity of man, there is no just ground for cavil at the account of this matter, as recorded by Moses.

4. The *penalty* annexed to the Adamic law has been made a ground of complaint, as being excessively rigorous, and entirely disproportionate to the offense. That we may understand this subject, it will be necessary to take into the account the true condition of man as an accountable being, the nature of the authority by which he was bound, and the true character of his offense. When these things are all duly considered, we think it will be apparent that the penalty of death, which has been referred to as so excessively severe, was truly appended to the law in mercy.

First, then, man, in order that he might be a proper subject of moral

government, was made a rational, intelligent being, capable of understanding his duty and the reasons thereof. He was also endued with the capacity of perceiving and feeling the influence of motive. In a word, he had every attribute of a free moral agent. His duty was plainly prescribed. He was not left to feel his way amid the darkness of uncertainty or conjecture. Light flowed into his soul by a direct communication from God, with clearness and power, like the unobstructed rays of the sun. No dire necessity impelled him to transgress; for he had every faculty and ability necessary to enable him to obey. He was created "sufficient to have stood, though free to fall." Such was the condition in which he was placed, and such were the circumstances by which he was rendered accountable for his actions.

What, we inquire in the next place, was the *nature of that authority* by which he was bound, and to which he was held responsible? It was the authority of the infinite God, enforced by all the obligations of gratitude, as well as justice, truth, and holiness. An obligation thus high and sacred, and resting upon the authority of the infinite perfections of God, could neither be relinquished nor compromitted. The honor of the eternal throne forbade it.

With this view of the subject, we ask, what was the *character of the offense of man?* Surely it could not have been the trivial thing supposed by those who speak so flippantly of the mere circumstance of tasting an apple. The eating of the forbidden fruit was the external act of transgression; but the seat of the crime lay deep in the soul. There, where all had been holiness and love, every evil principle reigned in triumph—unbelief was there; treason, rebellion, enmity, pride, lust, murder—in a word, the root of every evil passion which Satan could instigate, or which man has ever felt, was contained in the principle which actuated man in the first transgression. The authority of God was here cast off; the word of God was contradicted; allegiance to Heaven was relinquished; and the claims of gratitude were entirely disregarded. How exceedingly defective must be the view of this subject taken by those who represent the first sin as a venial impropriety —a slight aberration, of scarce sufficient magnitude to merit the notice of God!

In view, then, of all these circumstances, can we complain that the penalty of death was annexed to the law? Is it an evidence of cruelty on the part of the Lawgiver? The whole history of the case, when properly understood, presents rather an evidence of the goodness of God. The object contemplated in the affixing of a penalty to a law, in all good governments, is not primarily the punishment of the subject, but

the prevention of crime. So in the command given to Adam: that he might be deterred from transgression, and thereby preserved in his pristine state of bliss, the penalty was annexed—"In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely *die*." If the prime object of the penalty was the prevention of crime, so also the severity of the penalty, if such it may be called, originated in the divine benevolence, which labored to make the inducements to obedience as strong as might be, without destroying the free agency and accountability of man.

Thus have we contemplated the history and circumstances of perhaps the most solemn and deeply important event connected with the history of our race, except that greater work of redemption, providing for our recovery from the miseries of the Fall. The full import of the penalty of death, together with the relation sustained in the transaction of the Fall by Adam to his posterity, will be considered when we investigate the doctrine of human depravity, or the effects of the Fall.

We now close this chapter by one observation in reference to the date of this melancholy event. It seems that sacred chronology has not been careful to gratify curiosity in this particular. How long the first pair maintained their integrity, and drank at the fountain of unmixed happiness, we know not; but it is probable that the time was short. The "fine gold" soon became "dim," and the desolating curse soon fell, with its withering influence, upon the fair, and, till then, the smiling, face of nature. But while we cast a mournful retrospect upon the wide-spread ruin entailed upon his race by the first Adam, we may, through the second Adam, hope to gain a habitation in "the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness"

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IX.

QUESTION 1. In what place is the history of the fall of man recorded?

2. What is the substance of the Mosaic account of the transaction?

3. Is this to be understood *literally* or *allegorically?*

4. What two facts are given in evidence of the literal interpretation?

5. Was it possible for God to have prevented the Fall?

6. How can we reconcile it with his goodness that he did not prevent it?

7. Could he have prevented its possibility without destroying the free agency of man?

8. How may it be shown that the possibility of apostasy is essential to the character of a moral agent?

9. What objection has been made to the divine administration from the nature of the prohibition?

10. What is the distinction between a *moral* and a *positive* precept?

11. May we certainly know that a *positive* precept is not founded on reason?

12. Upon what is our obligation to obey founded?

13. Why does it appear that a positive precept is the best test of obedience?

14. How may the propriety of the law given to Adam as a test of obedience be argued from its simplicity?

15. Wherein does it apppear that it was presented in mercy?

16. How could God, consistently with his mercy, permit man to be tempted?

17. What was probably the difference between the temptation of man and that of the fallen angels?

18. What was the prime agent in the seduction of man?

19. Could the serpent have uttered articulate sounds? What was probably the original form of the serpent?

20. What objection has been raised in reference to the penalty of the law?

21. How does it appear that the first sin was not a trivial offense?

22. What was the prime object in affixing the penalty to the law?

23. Can you fix the precise date of the Fall?

24. Is it probable that Adam continued long in his pristine state?

CHAPTER X.

THE EFFECTS OF THE FALL OF MAN — PENALTY OF THE LAW CONSIDERED.

HAVING contemplated, in the preceding chapter, the circumstances connected with the *history* of the fall of man, we come now to consider its *effects.*

This is one of the most important subjects in theology. It presents the basis on which is founded the whole remedial scheme of the gospel; for if the lapsed state of man be denied, his redemption must be superfluous. An erroneous view of the effects of the Fall, from the very nature of the subject, would be likely to extend itself throughout the whole gospel system. Hence, the principal heresies with which the Church in all ages has been infested, have originated in improper views upon this subject.

In divinity, as in all science, to start right is of vast importance; therefore peculiar care should be exercised in endeavoring to ascertain correctly the consequences of the first apostasy of man, from which evidently springs the necessity of redemption.

In approaching this important subject, that which demands our investigation is:

I. *The nature of the penalty attached to the Adamic law.*

Upon this subject a great diversity of opinion has existed. The first, and perhaps the most defective theory of all that we shall notice, is that which has been attributed to Pelagius, a Briton, who flourished about the commencement of the fifth century.

The same opinion was adopted by Socinus of the sixteenth century; and, with little variation, is held by Socinians generally of the present day.

According to this theory, *death,* the penalty of the law, is not to be understood, in the full and proper sense, as implying either death *temporal, spiritual,* or *eternal;* but is rather to be understood figuratively, as implying a state of exposure to the divine displeasure, expulsion from paradise, and a subjection to ills and inconveniences such as should make the transgressor feel the evil of his sin, and might serve as a disciplinary correction, to prevent a subsequent departure from duty; but

that the body of Adam, being created naturally mortal, would have died, whether he had sinned or not; and that his soul did not lose the divine image and favor, though it became to some extent injured in its faculties.

A second opinion is, that the death affixed as the penalty of the law extended to both soul and body, and implied complete annihilation.

A third theory is, that the death threatened related exclusively to the body, and, consequently, that the soul is just as pure, until defiled by actual transgression, as the soul of Adam in paradise. This was the notion of Dr. Taylor, of Norwich.

A fourth view of the subject is, that the threatened penalty implied spiritual death only, or the loss of the divine image from the soul; and that the death of the body is only an after consequence, resulting not directly from sin, but from a merciful interposition, by which man was denied access to the tree of life.

That none of these views presents the true scriptural account of this subject, we hope to render apparent by the establishment of the following proposition, viz., that *the death threatened as the penalty of the Adamic law included death temporal, spiritual, and eternal.*

1. *Our first argument upon this subject is founded upon the scriptural account containing the record of the original threatening, and of the curse subsequently denounced.*

The language of the penalty is, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." The language of the curse denounced upon Adam, after his transgression, is this: "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

The language here quoted, in which the curse is denounced upon Adam immediately subsequent to the Fall, must be understood, to some extent at least, as a comment upon the threatened penalty. This we may clearly infer from the preface to the curse, "*Because* thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife," etc. Here we are plainly taught that the curse denounced is a direct consequence of the transgression; and if so, it must be embraced in the penalty; for nothing but the penalty can result directly and necessarily from the transgression. To suppose that the entire malediction, as here specified, was not

embraced in the previous threatening, would be to charge the Almighty with unnecessary severity, for, in strict justice, nothing could have been required more than the execution of the penalty; nor could the transgression of the law be thus directly specified, as the cause of this curse, upon any supposition, but that the previously declared penalty demanded it. We may not only infer that this entire malediction was embraced in the penalty, but also that, so far as the language extends, it is a comment upon the penalty itself. If the above be admitted as true, we have here a positive proof that the sorrows and afflictions of life, together with the final dissolution of the body, were embraced in the penalty. It is here declared that the very earth is cursed for the sake of man, to whom it had been given for an inheritance; that he shall lead a life of toil and sorrow, and that "to dust shall he return;" and all this because of his sin. Most evidently, then must the death of the body have been included in the penalty.

But again, we find here, also, very conclusive proof, of an indirect and inferential kind, that spiritual death is also included. By this death is understood the loss of the divine image and favor. Physical evil, according to the whole tenor of the Scriptures and the nature of the divine government, is understood to be the result of moral evil. Hence, to suppose that man is involved in the dreadful miseries here denounced, and yet not the subject of such a moral defection as to deprive him of the immaculate image and favor of God, is an absurdity which, we think, can only be adopted by persons of easy faith.

2. Our next proof that the original penalty embraced death, corporeal, spiritual, and eternal, is founded upon the *nature of man* to whom the law was given.

The plain, common-sense interpretation of Scripture, where there is nothing in the context to oppose it, is always the best. Let any honest inquirer after truth, who has no favorite theory to sustain, take up his Bible, and read, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and endeavor to learn, from the nature of the person addressed, the character of the death specified, and what must be his conclusion? The law was here given, not to the *body* of man, previously to its union with the soul, but to man in his compound character, after his two natures had been united, so as to constitute but one person; therefore the penalty is not denounced against the body alone, but against man in his entire nature. It was not said, "In the day thou eatest thereof" thy body "shall die," nor thy soul "shall die;" but "thou"—meaning Adam, a compound being, consisting of *soul* and *body*—"thou," in thy entire nature, "shalt die."

Again, if either the soul or body had been entirely alone in the offense, there might be more plausibility in the supposition that it would be alone in the penalty; but there was a sin of the soul resulting in a bodily act of transgression; therefore the natural inference is, that as both partook of the offense, both must be involved in the penalty. Once more: as eternal death is only a perpetuity of the sentence of death denounced against man, it would follow as a natural consequence that the death must be eternal unless removed; but the penalty made no provision for its own destruction—consequently it must have included eternal death. Thus have we seen that, from the very nature of man to whom the law was given, we may reasonably infer that the penalty denounced against him was death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

3. In the next place, we appeal to the express declaration of the word of God, in various passages, in confirmation of the view we have taken of the import of the penalty under consideration. To an unprejudiced mind, one would think that the very phraseology of the penalty itself were enough.

Upon this subject we have the following forcible remarks from Dr John Dick, in his Lectures: "It may be sufficient, in the present case, to repeat the words of God to Adam, without quoting other passages in confirmation of their meaning: 'In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' Can any thing be plainer than that if he did not eat he should not die? Can we suppose that God threatened, as a consequence of transgression, what would take place in the course of nature? that Adam was deterred from disobedience by the annunciation of an event which would befall him, although he performed his duty? If men will make themselves ridiculous by venting opinions stamped with folly and absurdity, let them beware of exposing their Maker to contempt."

Upon the same subject, Mr. Watson, in his Institutes, uses the following pertinent observations: "The death threatened to Adam we conclude, therefore, to have extended to the soul of man as well as to his body, though not in the sense of annihilation; but for the confirmation of this, it is necessary to refer more particularly to the language of Scripture, which is its own best interpreter, and it will be seen that the opinion of those divines who include in the penalty attached to the first offense the very 'fullness of death,' as it has been justly termed—death, *bodily*, *spiritual*, and *eternal*—is not to be puffed away by sarcasm, but stands firm on inspired testimony."

If, as we have seen, death is the penalty of the law given to Adam, is it not manifest that we exercise a freedom with the word of God for

which we have no license, if we restrict the import of death within narrower limits than are assigned to it in the Scriptures themselves? In Rom. vi. 23, St. Paul declares, "For the wages of sin is death." This is presented as a broad principle of truth—a Scripture axiom of universal application. Here is no particular kind of death specified, but the term *death* is used in a general and unlimited sense; then, wherever we find death in any shape or form, or of any kind, we here have the inspired testimony that it is the "wages of sin." We have only then to turn to the Holy Oracles still farther, and inquire in what sense the term *death* is there used; and we have the plainest testimony that in the same sense it is "the wages of sin;" or, in other words, results from sin as its penalty. The dissolution of the body is so frequently spoken of as death, that quotations would perhaps be superfluous. We, however, present one—1 Cor. xv. 22: "For as in Adam all *die*, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Here the apostle is discoursing especially on the subject of the dissolution of the body, and its resurrection, and uses the term *death*, and represents it as taking place "in Adam," which, if it does not imply that death resulted penally from the first transgression, can have no intelligible meaning whatever.

The fifth chapter to the Romans furnishes an ample comment on the penalty of the Adamic law. We find there these words: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. But not as the offense, so also is the free gift. For if through the offense of one many be *dead*, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. For if by one man's offense death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Here we may plant ourselves on the testimony of the apostle, and ask, Can language be more specific? can proof be more positive? Two points are here established beyond the possibility of dispute: first, that death has directly resulted from the transgression of Adam; second, that this death is opposed to the life which is bestowed through Christ. Christ is the fountain of life in the same sense in which Adam is the source of death. We have, therefore, only to ask in what sense is Christ the source of life. Is he not the source of life, bodily, spiritual, and eternal? None can deny it without giving the lie to the apostle. And if so, it is equally clear that death in all these senses is the result, the penal result, of Adam's sin.

But still it may be inquired, Have we scriptural authority for applying the term *death* to the loss of the divine image from the soul, and the

eternal separation of both soul and body from God? In Eph. ii. 1, we read: "And you hath he quickened, who were *dead* in trespasses and sins." Here is only one of the many places in which spiritual death in spoken of. This is a moral destitution, or a separation of the soul from the life and love of God; and it is here spoken of as opposed to the quickening influence of Christ. We saw, in the fifth chapter to the Romans, that the death counteracted by Christ was the result of Adam's sin; hence it will follow that the spiritual death here referred to was included in the penalty under consideration.

In reference to eternal death, Mr. Watson makes the following remarks: "But the highest sense of the term 'death,' in Scripture, is the punishment of the soul in a future state, both by a loss of happiness and separation from God, and also by a positive infliction of divine wrath. Now, this is stated not as peculiar to any dispensation of religion, but as common to all—as the penalty of the transgression of the law of God in every degree. 'Sin is the transgression of the law;' this is its definition. 'The wages of sin is death;' this is its penalty. Here we have no mention made of any particular sin, as rendering the transgressor liable to this penalty, nor of any particular circumstance under which sin may be committed, as calling forth that fatal expression of the divine displeasure; but of sin itself generally—of transgression of the divine law in every form and degree, it is affirmed, 'The wages of sin is *death*.' This is, therefore, to be considered as an axiom in the jurisprudence of Heaven. 'Sin,' says St. James, with like absolute and unqualified manner, 'when it is finished, bringeth forth *death*;' nor have we the least intimation given in Scripture that any sin whatever is exempted from this penalty, or that some sins are punished in this life only, and others in the life to come. The degree of punishment will be varied by the offense; but death is the penalty attached to all sin, unless it is averted by pardon, which itself supposes that in the law the penalty has been incurred. What was there then in the case of Adam to take him out of this rule? His act was a transgression of the law, and therefore sin; as sin, its wages was 'death,' which in Scripture, we have seen, means, in its highest sense, future punishment."

According, therefore, to the testimony of Scripture, we conclude that the penalty of the Adamic law was death, *temporal*, *spiritual*, and *eternal*.

To suppose that this is to be understood in the sense of annihilation, would be contrary to the Scriptures, as well as every testimony in reference to death in any sense of the term. Death never means annihila

tion. We know not that any created substance ever has been, or ever will be, annihilated. The death of the body is only a separation of the soul from it, resulting in a decomposition of its substance; but not a particle of matter is annihilated. Therefore, to speak of eternal death as the annihilation of soul and body, is a bare assumption, without the least shadow of testimony, either from reason, observation, or Scripture, to sustain it.

II. We examine, in the second place, *the peculiar relation sustained by Adam to his posterity in the transaction of the Fall.*

The different opinions entertained on this subject may be reduced to three.

1. Pelagians and Socinians maintain that Adam acted for himself alone, and that his posterity have sustained no injury by his fall, either in their physical or moral constitution; but that they are born as holy as he was in paradise, and that the death of the body would have been inevitable, even if Adam had not sinned.

2. Another theory, which has had its advocates, is, that Adam was a kind of natural representative of his posterity; so that the effects of his fall, to some extent, are visited upon his posterity, not as a penal infliction for guilt attributed to them, but as a natural consequence, in the same sense in which children are compelled to suffer poverty or disgrace, by the profligacy or crimes of their immediate parent, without involving them, in any sense, in the guilt on account of which they suffer. This was the opinion of Dr. Whitby and several divines of the Established Church of England, who, to say the least, leaned too much toward Pelagianism.

3. A third, and, as we believe, the most rational and scriptural view of the subject is, that Adam, in the transaction of the fall, was the federal head and proper legal representative of his posterity, insomuch that they fell in him as truly, in the view of the law, as he fell himself; and that the consequences of the first sin are visited upon them, as a penal infliction, for the guilt of Adam imputed to them. That such was the relation of Adam to his posterity, we think can be satisfactorily shown.

The *federative* character of Adam is so clearly implied in the first blessing pronounced upon man, that it would be exceedingly difficult, without its admission, to place upon the passage a consistent interpretation. Gen. i. 28: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Here,

observe, the command is, to "replenish the earth," and to "have dominion over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Now, if all this cannot be applied to the original pair, but must embrace their posterity, then it will follow that, as their posterity are not here named, they were included in Adam, their legal head and representative, through whom this blessing was pronounced upon them as really as it was upon Adam himself.

In 1 Cor. xv. 45, we read: "The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." Here we see Christ and Adam so plainly contrasted that the very name Adam is given also to Christ. If this is not designed to teach us that Adam, like Christ, was a public character, what can the language import? The apostle, in this chapter, was contrasting death and its attendant evils, which came by Adam, with life and its attendant blessings, which came by Christ. In accordance with which, in the 22d verse, we read: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Now, if Christ was a federal representative through whom the blessing of life is communicated, even so was Adam a federal head through whom death is communicated.

In the fifth chapter to the Romans, the apostle considers the subject at large, and contrasts the evils entailed upon his posterity by Adam with the benefits they derive from Christ. From the apostle's argument, it is clear that Adam was as much a public representative in the transgression as Christ was in the righteousness of the atonement. Unless we admit that Adam was the federal head of mankind, how can they be constituted sinners by his offense? Death, being "the wages of sin," could not be inflicted on all mankind unless they had sinned, either personally, or by their representative. But if we deny that Adam was the representative of his posterity in the eye of the law, the law could never treat them as sinners. But we see death passing "upon all," as the apostle says, "for that all have sinned." Here, observe, the argument is that all upon whom death passes have sinned; but death passes upon many (infants) who have not sinned personally, or "after the similitude of Adam's transgression;" then they must have sinned in Adam, and if so, he must have been, in the eye of the law, their federal head.

It has already been proved that death is the penalty of the law, or, in other words, "the wages of sin." If so, to suppose that death merely results indirectly upon the posterity of Adam as a natural consequence, and not as a direct penalty, must be an erroneous view of the subject, unsustained by reason or Scripture. Indeed, to deny that Adam in the

first transgression was a public representative of his race, would involve us at once in a train of inextricable difficulties. How could we reconcile it with the justice of God, that all mankind should be involved with Adam in the curse, unless they were represented by him in the transgression? Will the justice of God punish the perfectly innocent? Can the penalty of a holy law fall with all its weight upon those who, in no sense of the word, are viewed in the light of transgressors?

We think it must be obvious, from what has been said, that the only scriptural and consistent view of the subject is, to consider Adam in his state of trial as the federal head of all mankind. In *him* they sinned; in *him* they fell; and with *him* they suffer the penalty of a violated law. All difficulty which this arrangement might present, in view of the mercy of God, vanishes as the remedial scheme opens to view.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER X.

Question 1. From what does the importance of a right understanding of this subject appear?

2. What is the Pelagian and Socinian view of the import of the penalty of the Adamic law?

3. What is the second opinion specified?

4. What is the third theory, mentioned as advocated by Dr. Taylor?

5. What is the fourth theory mentioned?

6. What is said to be the scriptural view of the subject?

7. What is the first argument presented?

8. Upon what is the second argument founded?

9. To what is the appeal made in the third place?

10. What scriptures are quoted, and how are they shown to prove the point?

11. What different views have been entertained with regard to the relation sustained by Adam to his posterity?

12. What is the correct view of this subject?

13. By what proofs is it sustained?

14. In what difficulty would a denial of this doctrine involve us?

15. In what way may all the seeming difficulties connected with the true doctrine upon this subject be removed?

CHAPTER XI.

THE EFFECTS OF THE FALL OF MAN — DEPRAVITY — THE DOCTRINE DEFINED AND PROVED.

In the preceding chapter we endeavored to prove, first, that the penalty attached to the Adamic law embraced death, *temporal*, *spiritual*, and *eternal;* and secondly, that Adam, in the transaction of the Fall, was the *federal head* and *public representative* of his posterity. The bearing these points have on the discussion of the *effects* of the Fall is so direct and important that we have deemed it necessary first to invite special attention to them.

The subject which we propose discussing in the present chapter is, *the effects of the Fall upon the moral state of Adam's posterity;* or, in other words, *the doctrine of human depravity.*

We will first *illustrate what we mean by this doctrine*, and then *examine the evidence by which it is sustained.* Some have denied the native depravity of human nature altogether.

I. Human Depravity Defined. Pelagians, Socinians, and others of kindred sentiments, have represented the human soul, at its first entrance on the stage of life, as being pure and spotless as an angel, or as Adam when first he proceeded from the hand of his Maker.

Others have contended that all men have suffered to some extent, in their moral powers, by Adam's sin; but that there has not resulted a total loss of all good, but merely a greater liability to go astray, requiring a greater degree of watchfulness to retain the degree of good of which we are by nature possessed.

The first theory is a total denial of depravity by nature; the second denies it in part. But that neither opinion is sustained by Scripture or reason, we hope to make appear in the course of this chapter.

The true doctrine upon this subject, which we shall endeavor to sustain by evidence, is this: *that all mankind are by nature so depraved as to be totally destitute of spiritual good, and inclined only to evil continually.*

This doctrine is thus expressed in the seventh Article of Religion, as set forth in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church

"Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk,) but it is the corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually."

It may be inquired whether, according to the preceding presentation, we may properly understand that man by nature is *totally* depraved. To this question we reply in the affirmative. Although some, who have been generally reputed orthodox, have hesitated to adopt the phrase *total depravity*, yet we think that, when properly defined, it expresses clearly and forcibly the Scripture doctrine upon this subject; and, if so, to object to its use merely because the *term* is not in the Scriptures, though the sense it implies is found there, is perfectly puerile.

Those who have opposed the doctrine of total depravity, have generally presented a distorted view of the subject, quite different from that for which its advocates have contended. They have represented total depravity as implying depravity in the greatest possible degree, in every possible sense. Thus they have argued that if all men are totally depraved, none, even by practice, can be worse than others, and none can ever become worse than they already are. Then they have appealed to the evidence of Scripture and facts, to show that some are more wicked and depraved than others; and that the wicked may "wax worse and worse." This they have considered a full refutation of the doctrine of total depravity; and they have boldly raised the shout of victory, as though the whole system they opposed had been completely demolished; whereas they have only been playing their engines upon a fabric of their own invention, leaving the doctrine, in the sense for which its advocates contend, undisturbed by their arguments.

No sensible advocate of the doctrine of total depravity ever contended that all men are personally wicked in the same degree, or that bad men may not still become worse; nor can such inference be fairly made from a correct representation of the doctrine. Were it contended that all men are by nature depraved to the greatest possible degree, in every possible sense, and that such must be their *personal* character, till changed by converting grace, such a consequence might with more plausibility be deduced.

The task, however, may devolve upon us to show how the doctrine of total depravity can be understood so as not to involve the above consequences. This, we think, can easily be done to the satis-

faction of the unbiased mind. Depravity may be total in more senses than one.

1. First, it may be total, because *it extends to all the powers and faculties of the soul;* so that every part of the moral constitution is deranged and tainted by iniquity and pollution.

Not only the *judgment*, but the *memory*, the *conscience*, the *affections*, and *all the moral powers of our nature*, are depraved and polluted by sin. Now, can it be proved that total depravity, in this sense, involves the consequences above specified? Surely not. Does it necessarily follow that if all men are by nature thus depraved, none can be personally worse than others, or become worse than they now are? Most certainly it does not.

2. Secondly, depravity may be total, because it implies the *absence or privation of all positive good.*

That this is one sense in which depravity is understood to be total by the advocates of the doctrine, we see from the eighth Article of Religion in the Methodist Discipline: "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will."

This implies a total loss, by the Fall, of all spiritual good; or, in other words, a complete and total erasure of the divine image from the soul. But does it follow from this that all men are so bad that they can in no sense become worse? Surely not. All may by nature be totally depraved in this sense of the word, and yet some may be worse in their personal character than others, and may still "wax worse and worse" themselves.

3. Again, depravity may be total, because *the entire capacity and powers of the soul, apart from grace, are filled, and continually employed, with evil.*

That this is one sense in which the doctrine is understood, may be seen by reference to the seventh Article of Religion already quoted from the Methodist Discipline: "Man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually." Surely it does not follow from this that there can be no degrees in wickedness. May not the capacity and powers of the soul enlarge and gain strength by the practice of sin? and, if so, may they not, in the same proportion, contain and perform a greater degree of moral evil, and yet all the while be filled and employed with evil—"only

evil, and that continually"? Thus we perceive that there are various important senses in which depravity may be understood to be total, and yet not be so understood as to exclude the possibility of degrees in wickedness.

(1) The apparent difficulty in reconciling the doctrine of total depravity with the admitted fact that there are *degrees* in wickedness, results, perhaps, entirely from overlooking *the influence of divine grace upon personal character.*

According to Scripture, the "true light lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" so that none are left destitute of at least a degree of saving grace, shining upon the benighted and polluted powers of their souls. This grace is designed to counteract the influence of the Fall; and if some are not so deeply depraved as others in their personal character, it is not because they are better by nature, but because they have, to some extent, been brought under the influence of divine grace, through the operation of the Holy Spirit. If the wicked "wax worse and worse," it is because they more and more resist, and thereby remove themselves from the salutary influence of this enlightening and preventing grace.

Before any valid objection to the doctrine for which we have contended can be founded upon the degrees in the personal character of the wicked, it must be proved that this diversity results neither in whole nor in part from the agency of divine grace, in connection with the education, moral conduct, and agency of men, in rejecting or yielding to the gracious influence imparted, but that it is to be attributed exclusively to an original and native difference in the moral powers and character, as received by descent from our common progenitor. For this we presume none will contend; hence the objection under review cannot be sustained. The native moral character of man, and that character which individuals may sustain after having passed the line of accountability, and acquired an almost endless diversity in the modification of original character, accordingly as they have yielded to or resisted the influence of divine grace, are entirely distinct things.

To argue, therefore, against the doctrine of the native total depravity of man, from the degrees in character which men personally acquire, is obviously fallacious.

(2) Again, to suppose, as the opponents of this doctrine are in the habit of contending, that total depravity implies the possession and exercise of every possible evil in the highest possible degree, is *self-contradictory and absurd.*

This the very nature of the subject, when properly understood, will

clearly evince. There are some evil principles so diametrically opposed to each other in their nature, that the one will necessarily work the destruction of the other. Thus, avarice may destroy licentiousness and prodigality, and *vice versa*. Excessive ambition cannot consist with indolence, etc. Now, to suppose that the same individuals shall be characterized by every evil in the highest possible degree, at the same time, is to suppose what is impossible in the nature of things, and what the doctrine of total depravity, as above defined, does not require. When we say that all men are by nature totally depraved, we do not mean that they are depraved in the greatest possible degree, and in every possible sense, so that none can become practically worse than they now are. But we mean, 1. That all the powers and faculties of the soul are depraved. 2. That there is a privation of all spiritual good. 3. That the entire capacity and powers of the soul are filled and continually employed with evil; and that all the good belonging to personal character has been superinduced by grace. This we conceive to be the scriptural and correct view of the subject.

Let the impugners of this doctrine first inform themselves correctly in reference to its proper import, and then, if Scripture and reason are on their side, let them explode it as a silly fable, or sickly relic of the dark ages; but if this cannot be fairly accomplished, let not an important and sacred truth "be puffed away by sarcasm," but let it rest firm upon the basis of Scripture testimony, corroborated as it is by important and indubitable facts, connected with the character and history of man.

II. Proof of the Doctrine Exhibited. Having endeavored, to some extent at least, to *define* the native depravity of man, as held by the great body of orthodox Christians, we proceed, in the next place, to the examination of the *evidences* by which it is sustained. Upon a subject of so great importance, as we might reasonably be led to hope, we shall find the evidence abundant and conclusive.

1. Our *first* argument upon this subject is founded upon the truth of two positions, already established in the preceding chapter: first, that the penalty of the Adamic law *included death, temporal, spiritual,* and *eternal;* secondly, that in this transaction, Adam was the *federal head and representative of his posterity.*

Now, if the above relationship existed between Adam and his posterity, it must necessarily follow that all the penal consequences of the first sin *legally* fall upon all mankind. In Adam all mankind were represented. Our common nature was seminally in him, and with him identified in the offense.

As the acorn contains within its limited compass the substance, germ, or stamina of vegetable life, from which proceeds, without any additional exercise of creative power in the proper sense, the stately oak, with its numerous branches; even so was Adam our federal head, as it regards our natural existence. In him we were seminally created, and from him have we all proceeded, as naturally as the branch from the oak, or the oak from the acorn. As the very life of the tree is dependent on the disposition made of the acorn, so the very existence of his posterity depended on the preservation of Adam. Had he been annihilated the moment he transgressed, the multiplied millions of his posterity would have perished with him. From their state of seminal existence they would instantly have sunk back into nonentity, and never could have realized a state of conscious being. As we thus see plainly that, according to the very nature of things, he was the natural head of all our race, it will not appear unreasonable—nay, it appears almost to follow of necessity—that he should be constituted our federal head, in view of the law under which he was placed. As such, by his one offense, he "brought death into the world, and all our woe." Whatever the penalty attached to the law may have been, he incurred it as well for his posterity as for himself.

On this point the inquiry has been instituted, whether the posterity of Adam stand chargeable to the full extent with his personal obliquity, and whether *we* are to be viewed as having been guilty of actual transgression, in the strongest sense of the word. In reference to this intricate point, it may be difficult to use expressions which may not be understood to convey ideas variant from the true representation of Scripture. We may, however, we think, say with safety, that neither the holy law nor its infinite Author can look upon things differently from their true character. God must look upon sin as sin, and upon righteousness as righteousness, wherever they are found. It would therefore follow, that the posterity of Adam, *having never personally transgressed, cannot be viewed as personally guilty.* The personal act of Adam cannot be imputed to them as *their* personal act. It never was theirs personally, nor can it by any fiction of law be so considered. As Dr. Watts has remarked: "Sin is taken either for an *act of disobedience* to a law, or for the *legal result* of such an act—that is, the *guilt* or *liableness* to *punishment.*" Now, is it not clear that the guilt and full penalty of Adam's sin may be justly charged upon his posterity without making his transgression their *personal* act?

A nation or community may be justly chargeable with all the consequences of the act of their acknowledged head and legal representative

as fully as though they had done the same thing personally; even so if, as we have seen, Adam was the legal head and representative of his posterity, they are justly chargeable with all the consequences of his offense, notwithstanding his sin cannot be viewed or charged upon them as their personal act. It is only theirs through their representative. The guilt and penalty necessarily resulting therefrom are, in the view of the law, justly imputed to and incurred by them. This is the scriptural view of the subject, and necessarily results from the relationship of *federal head*, which we have seen Adam sustained to all mankind. Unless he had sustained this relation to his posterity, his guilt could in no sense of the word have been imputed to them, without the most flagrant outrage upon the principles of justice; and unless his guilt had been imputed to them, it is impossible to justify the divine administration in visiting upon them the dreadful penalty. These three points, then, are so intimately interwoven in the nature of the divine government, that they necessarily hang together. Admit that Adam was our federal head, and our guilt and subjection to the penalty of death necessarily follow as legal consequences. Or, if we admit that we are involved in the penalty of death, this will necessarily presuppose our guilt; and if we admit our guilt, this will necessarily presuppose the above-mentioned relationship to Adam, as the only possible way of accounting for it.

But it may, perhaps, be asked, What connection has all this with the doctrine of the native total depravity of all mankind? To which we are now ready to reply that the connection is direct; and the doctrine is a necessary and irresistible inference from the principles above presented. If all mankind are involved in the penalty attached to the Adamic law, then it must follow either that they are totally depraved, or that total depravity was not necessarily connected with that penalty.

That spiritual death, or *the loss of the divine image from the soul*, (which are but other words for total depravity,) was included in that penalty, has already been shown in the preceding chapter. The argument, then, amounts to demonstration, that all mankind are by nature in a state of *moral pollution*, properly expressed by the phrase *total depravity*. As we have seen, death, in the fullness thereof, was the penalty of the law. "The wages of sin is *death*." "By one man sin entered into the world, and *death* by sin." Now, if all mankind are not involved in the penalty, we must flatly deny the word of God, which plainly and repeatedly represents death, in every sense of the word, as a penal infliction—a judicial sentence pronounced upon the guilty, as a just purishment for sin.

Not only so, but it will devolve upon us to account for death, as we see it in the world, in some other way. And how, we may ask, is this possible? The Scriptures say, "*Death* came by *sin*;" and that, too, the "sin of one man." As a judicial announcement of the penalty of a violated law, it was declared, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." This sentence most evidently reaches every child of Adam; therefore all are under the penalty; and as the penalty embraced death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, and as total depravity, or a complete alienation of the soul from the "image of God," or primitive holiness, is included therein, it necessarily follows, from their relation to Adam as their federal head, and the nature of the penalty in which they are involved, that *all mankind are by nature totally depraved.* (See Watson's Institutes, Part ii., Chap. 18.)

2. We proceed, in the next place, to adduce *direct declarations of Scripture* for the establishment of the doctrine under consideration. The doctrine of the innate depravity of human nature is found in almost all parts of the Bible.

(1) We first adduce proofs from *the Old Testament.*

The first passage we shall here present refers to the condition of man anterior to the flood. Gen. vi. 5: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Here we see the total depravity of the antediluvians expressed in language as forcible as could be framed for the purpose. "The heart of man is here," as Hebdon has observed, "put for the soul." This noble principle, formed originally for holy exercises, had become so deeply debased, that "every imagination of the thoughts"—that is, the entire intellectual and moral powers—had become totally corrupt; "only evil"—there was no moral good left—"continually:" this was not an occasional or even a frequent lapse into pollution, but it was the constant and uninterrupted state, not of a portion of the human family, but of "man," the general mass of the race of Adam.

Again, turn to Genesis viii. 21, and read: "I will not again curse the ground any more, for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth: neither will I again smite any more every living thing." Here we may observe two things are forcibly expressed:

(1) The total depravity of man in general. The term refers to the entire race; spoken at a time, too, when none but Noah and his family were living upon the earth.

(2) This total depravity is represented as characteristic of human

nature, not in certain stages or periods of life, but during the entire history—"from his youth"—that is, his infancy, or earliest period of his accountability. Here is not the slightest intimation that this depravity is acquired by education, example, or otherwise; nay, the supposition is impossible. If the principle of evil were not innate, it could not be affirmed to exist "from his youth," for some time, at least, would be necessary for its acquirement. Nor could this affirmation be made of man, or human nature, as such, especially as the good example and religious precepts of the righteous family then existing, if the character of man is only corrupted by example or education, might certainly be expected to exercise a salutary influence, at least, upon some of their posterity, so as to prevent their falling into this state of moral pollution.

Next, we turn to Job. v. 7: "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward." Here the plain meaning is that a state of trouble is just as natural and certain to man as for "the sparks to fly upward." Now, unless it can be shown that perfectly innocent beings are subjected to "trouble," pain, and death, which the Scriptures declare to be the consequences only of sin, it will necessarily follow that man is born in sin and guilt. In Job xv. 14, we read: "What is man that he should be *clean?* and he which is born of a woman, that he should be *righteous?*" The reading of the Septuagint here is, "Who shall be clean from filth? Not one, even though his life on earth be a single day."

Again, Ps. li. 5: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Here, upon the supposition that man is born in a state of moral rectitude, the plain declarations of Scripture are subject to no rational interpretation, but must be shamefully evaded or boldly denied.

Ps. lviii. 3, 4: "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." Here, "estranged" and "speaking lies" certainly strongly express a state of depravity "Estranged"—alienated from the "divine image;" "speaking lies"—going forward in actual sin; "from the womb, as soon as they are born"—not an acquired, but a native depravity. What other sense can the words bear?

Jer. xvii. 9: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" Here, total depravity is expressed in strong language. Observe, the prophet does not say, the hearts of the most abandoned characters; but "the heart of man"—the race in general, in their native state. He does not speak of it as partially, but totally, depraved—"desperately wicked."

3. Quotations from the Old Testament might be multiplied, but we deem it useless, and shall now pass to *the New Testament.*

Perhaps one of the most forcible passages upon this subject is found in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, 10–18th verses: "As it is written, There is none righteous, no not one: there is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes."

The apostle here quotes from the fourteenth and fifty-third Psalms. A more glowing picture of total depravity it is, perhaps, impossible for language to paint. It applies to the entire race: "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men" (the world at large); and here is portrayed the divine decision upon their moral character. That this description refers to the native character of all men, is evident from the fact that the language here used could not apply to the *actual* moral character of all men, in any age; for there have always been some who, in this sense, have been pronounced righteous, in the judgment of God himself.

That the application and force of the apostle's argument in this chapter may be more clearly seen, we will quote the 19th and 23d verses: "Now, we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and *all the world may become guilty before God.*" "For *all have sinned*, and come short of the glory of God." The apostle is here illustrating the doctrine of justification. His object is to show, 1. That all the world, both Jews and Gentiles, are in the same deplorable state of "sin" and "guilt." 2. That there is but one plan by which any can be justified, that is, by the mercy of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. His whole argument is founded upon the universal depravity of man; and this must be understood to apply to the state of all the human family, not at any particular period, but during their entire history up to the time in which justification takes place by faith in Christ. If we deny this, his argument immediately becomes inappropriate and powerless. If men are by nature in a *justified* state, then how could the apostle argue, from their unholy and sinful nature, that all need justification, and that they can obtain it by faith alone?

Let it be observed that the expressions of the apostle, in this chapter, in reference to the state of man, are so general and so full in their extent and import, that two important points are established beyond dispute: 1. That he is describing the condition of the whole human family, in every stage of their existence, previous to their acceptance of salvation by the gospel. His expressions are, "Both Jews and Gentiles," "all," and "all the world." 2. The condition in which he represents them is not one of innocence or righteousness, but of sin and pollution: his language is, "They are all *under sin;* all *have sinned*, and *come short of the glory of God;*" and that "all the world may become *guilty* before God." Now, we may confidently demand, what portion of the human family are not here included? And if they are not in a state of moral pollution, what meaning can be placed upon the apostle's words? The testimony here is so pointed, that if the native depravity of man be not here taught, then shall we be compelled to affirm that "sin" is no more "sin," and "guilt" is no more "guilt."

Our next proof is founded upon those passages which base the necessity of the new birth upon the native depravity of man.

Here the discourse of our Lord with Nicodemus is conclusive. John iii. 3: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Fifth, sixth, and seventh verses: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

Here the necessity of the new birth is grounded upon the character with which we are born naturally. How, then, can this be, if we are born holy? Surely, if such were the case, so far from arguing therefrom the necessity of being born again, the rational inference would be, that as we had already been born in a state of holiness, there is no necessity for the new birth. That our Saviour, when he says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," by the term flesh, in the latter instance, refers to our native sinfulness and pollution, is clear from the fact that no other construction can be placed upon his words without making him speak nonsense. If we say that the word flesh is to be taken for the body literally, in both places, then the sentence only contains a simple truism, too puerile to be uttered by the lips of the blessed Jesus; and it would have been quite as instructive had he said, That which is true is true. Besides, how then could he have drawn, from the fact that he announced, any argument for the necessity of the new birth?

That the term flesh is frequently used in the Scriptures to denote the principle of corruption, or native depravity, in man, will appear from the following passages:—Rom. vii. 18: "In my *flesh* dwelleth no good thing." Rom. viii. 13: "If ye live after the *flesh*, ye shall die.' Gal. v. 17: "For the *flesh* lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the *flesh*."

In the eighth chapter of Romans, the apostle uses the term as expressive of a principle of unholiness opposed to the Spirit, and enlarges upon the subject so clearly as to furnish an admirable comment on our Lord's words to Nicodemus. Fifth to the eighth verse: "For they that are after the *flesh* do mind the things of the *flesh;* but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be *carnally* minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the *carnal* mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the *flesh* cannot please God." In 1 Cor. ii. 14, a parallel passage reads: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Now, let the quotations from the apostle be taken in connection with what our Saviour said to Nicodemus, and the argument is full and conclusive that every man who is literally born of the flesh inherits from his birth a carnal, unholy, or depraved nature, so directly opposed to the Spirit and every thing good, that in that nature, or while he walks after it, he cannot please God, and therefore he must be born again. How different this from the teachings of those who speak of the native purity of man, and represent a sinful disposition as the result of example or education!

The Bible doctrine most evidently is, that we are born with an unholy or sinful nature—that the principle of evil is as really and deeply engrafted in our natural constitution as that of poison in the egg of the serpent. As certainly as the young viper will be naturally poisonous and disposed to bite so soon as its native powers are developed, so will man, as he advances to maturity, be possessed of an evil nature of enmity to God, which will ever lead him in the way of sin, until the "old man be crucified," and he be "born again." If the tree be evil, the fruit will also be evil; if the fountain be impure, it will send forth a corrupt stream. The root of sin is inherent in the very nature of man. "Out of the heart of man," or from this native principle of unholiness, proceed all manner of wickedness and abominations. Such is the doctrine of the Scriptures.

4. We proceed in the next place to notice that *this doctrine is confirmed by experience and observation.*

Aside from the clear testimony of Scripture to the doctrine of the native depravity of man, it receives abundant corroborative proof from our individual experience, and from the history of the world. The principal evidence of this kind may be embraced in five important facts, which are thus stated by Mr. Watson:

"1. The, at least, general corruption of manners in all times and countries 2. The strength of the tendency in man to evil. 3. The early appearance of the principles of various vices in children. 4. Every man's consciousness of a natural tendency in his mind to one or more evils. 5. That general resistance to virtue in the heart which renders education, influence, watchfulness, and conflict, necessary to counteract the force of evil."

The above facts are so evident that we scarce suppose it possible for any one of common intelligence and candor to deny them. To account for them on any reasonable principles, upon the supposition that man is not by nature depraved, is, in our opinion, utterly impossible.

Socinians, Pelagians, and Unitarians, have generally admitted their truth, and their utmost ingenuity has been exerted to show that they can be reconciled with their system.

A brief notice of their efforts on this subject may suffice.

(1) To account for *the general prevalence of wickedness*, reliance has been placed on the influence of example and education.

Here a little attention, we think, will show that the difficulty is not solved, but only shifted to another quarter. If man be not naturally depraved, it will be just as difficult to account for bad example as for wickedness itself; yea, more: bad example is but another name for wickedness. Therefore, to say that general wickedness is the result of general bad example, is the same as to say that general wickedness is the result of general wickedness; or, in other words, the cause of itself, which is a manifest absurdity. Farther, we might ask, How was it, upon this principle, that the first example of the various species of moral wickedness originated? Whose example taught Cain to hate and murder his brother? Whose example taught the first idolater to worship an idol? And so we might pass over the entire catalogue of vices, and show that, according to this system, they never could have originated. That we are naturally imitative beings, to a great extent, we readily admit; but if this alone leads to a course of wickedness, it would follow, upon the same principle, that there should be

quite as much potency in good as in bad example. But, we ask, is this the case? Why did not the piety of righteous Noah lead all his sons and their descendants, from generation to generation, in the pathway of duty and obedience?

Again, is it not frequently the case that the children of pious parents fall into habits of immorality? If example alone shapes their character, surely the pious example of their parents, which they see almost constantly before their eyes, should be more powerful than the wicked example of others more remote from them, and perhaps but seldom witnessed. Allow to example all the influence it can possibly wield, still it would follow that if man is naturally innocent and pure, there should be more virtue than vice in the world; but if, as some contend, the soul is naturally indifferent—a perfect blank, tending neither to good or evil—then we might expect to find virtue and vice pretty equally balanced. But the fact of the world's history is contradictory to all this.

(2) But now look at the second fact—*the strength of the tendency in man to evil.*

Who has not felt this in his own heart? "When I would do good, evil is present with me." The turbulence of evil passions is such that the wise man has said, "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city." The strength of this native tendency in man to evil is so great that, to counteract it, an effort is required; the cross must be taken up, right hands cut off, right eyes plucked out, and a violent warfare upon the impulses of our own nature must be waged. Now contemplate the absurdity of supposing that bad example could originate this tendency to evil. If such were the case, good example would produce a similar tendency to good; but such is evidently not the fact. The native tendency of the human heart is invariably to sin; so much so, that in no case can it be counteracted but by the "crucifixion" of "the old man."

(3) The third fact is *the early appearance of the principles of various vices in children.*

Although entirely separated from their species, native instinct will lead the young lion or tiger to be fierce and voracious; and, with equal certainty, pride, envy, malice, revenge, selfishness, anger, and other evil passions, have been found invariably to spring up at a very early stage in the hearts of children, whatever may have been the example or education with which they have been furnished. Nay, they have more or less frequently exhibited themselves before the opportunity could have been afforded for the influence of example. Now, how can

this be accounted for but upon the supposition that the seeds of these vices are sown in our nature?

(4) The fourth fact is, that *every man is conscious of a natural tendency to many evils.*

All men are not prone alike to every species of vice. Some have a strong constitutional tendency to pride, others to anger, others to cowardice, others to meanness, and others perhaps to avarice or sensuality. Now, if we deny the native depravity of man, we necessarily deny this constitutional tendency to one vice more than another; for if man has no native tendency to evil in general, it is clear he can have no native tendency to any particular species of evil. Every whole includes all its parts.

(5) The fifth fact is, that *general resistance to virtue in the heart, which renders education, influence, watchfulness, and conflict necessary to counteract the force of evil.*

Vice in the human soul, like noxious weeds in a luxuriant soil, is a spontaneous growth. It only requires to be left alone, and it will flourish. Not so with virtue. Its seeds must be sown, and, like the valuable grains produced by the assiduous care and toil of the husbandman, it requires an early and persevering culture. Hence the necessity of a careful moral training—the value of a good education. What powerful influences are requisite to be wielded in the promotion of virtue! Motives of gratitude, interest, honor, benevolence, and every consideration that ought to weigh with an intelligent mind, are presented as incentives to virtue. The closest vigilance is necessary at every point to keep the object of good from being entirely forgotten or neglected; and, withal, a perpetual conflict must be kept up with surrounding evil, or the thorns and thistles of vice and folly will choke the growth of the good seed, and lay waste the blooming prospect. Why, we ask, is this the case? Deny the doctrine of the native depravity of man, and it is utterly unaccountable. If example were the only influence, and man had no greater tendency to evil than to good, might we not as well expect to find virtue the spontaneous and luxuriant growth, and vice the tender plant, requiring all this toil and care for its preservation and prosperity?

Those who have endeavored to account for these *facts* on the principle of *education*, find in their undertaking no less difficulty than those who attribute them to the influence of *example*. Education, in too many instances, it must be confessed, has been greatly defective; but never so bad as to account for all the evil passions and sinful practices of men. So far from this being the case, its general tendency, defective

as it may be, is of an opposite character. Men are generally wicked, not so much for the want of good precept, as in spite of it. Instruction has generally been better than example; so that, if bad example cannot account for the proneness to evil in men, much less can education. Who taught the first murderer his lessons in the crime of shedding his brother's blood? Which of the prevalent vices of mankind had its origin in imparted instruction? What crime is it that can only exist and prevail where special schools are established for its culture? The influence of education, it must be admitted, is very great; but the difficulty to be accounted for is this: Why is it that man is so *ready* in the school of vice, and so *dull* in the school of virtue? Deny the doctrine of our native corruption, and why might we not, with far more reason, expect that education should produce general virtue than general vice? Thus have we seen that experience and observation only confirm the Scripture doctrine of the native and total depravity of man.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XI.

QUESTION 1. What is the Pelagian and Socinian notion of depravity?

2. What other erroneous opinion has obtained on the subject?
3. What is the true doctrine upon this subject?
4. Is man by nature *totally* depraved?
5. What distorted view of this doctrine have its opponents generally presented?
6. Does *total* depravity imply depravity in every possible sense, and to the greatest possible extent?
7. In what respects may depravity be understood to be *total*?
8. Wherein appears the absurdity of representing *total* depravity as implying depravity in every possible sense and degree?
9. What two positions, already established, form the basis of the first argument?
10. How does it appear that Adam was the natural head and representative of his posterity?
11. Do his posterity stand chargeable with the personal obliquity of his offense?
12. In what two senses is sin taken, according to Dr. Watts?
13. How does it appear that our relation to Adam, our guilt, and our subjection to the penalty of the law, are inseparably connected?
14. In what way do these facts prove our native and total depravity?
15. What passages are brought from the Old Testament to prove this doctrine?
16. From the New Testament?
17. Do experience and observation confirm this doctrine?
18. What five obvious facts are here appealed to?
19. How have Pelagians and Socinians endeavored to account for these facts?
20. How does it appear that they only shift, without solving the difficulty?
21. If men were naturally holy, what kind of example might we reasonably expect to be most prevalent? If the moral character of man were naturally indifferent to good and evil, what might we expect to be the state of actual character?
22. How does it appear that education cannot account for these facts? Admitting the influence of education to be ever so great, what would be the great difficulty still remaining?

CHAPTER XII.

DEPRAVITY—OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

HAVING contemplated the *evidences* by which the doctrine of the innate depravity of man is sustained, we propose in the present chapter *an examination of several difficulties* with which the opposers of this doctrine have considered it encumbered.

I. It has been urged by the advocates of original innocence, that *this doctrine of total depravity makes God directly the author of sin, by alleging that he has judicially infused into the nature of man a positive evil, taint, or infection, which descends from Adam to all his posterity.*

To this we reply, that although some advocates of the doctrine have so expressed themselves as to give seeming ground for this objection, yet a close attention to the proper definition of depravity will entirely free the doctrine from any difficulty from this quarter. The doctrine of the native depravity of man, as taught in the Scriptures, does not imply a *direct infusion* of positive evil from the Almighty. The positive evil here implied is rather the necessary consequence of a privation of moral good: as it has been aptly expressed by some, it is "a *depravation* resulting from a *deprivation*."

This view of the subject is sustained by the following remarks from Arminius: "But since the tenor of the covenant into which God entered with our first parents was this, that if they continued in the favor and grace of God, by the observance of that precept and others, the gifts which had been conferred upon them should be transmitted to their posterity by the like divine grace which they had received; but if they should render themselves unworthy of those favors, through disobedience, that their posterity should likewise be deprived of them, and should be liable to the contrary evils: hence it followed that all men who were to be naturally propagated from them, have become obnoxious to death temporal and eternal, and have been destitute of that gift of the Holy Spirit, or of original righteousness. This punishment is usually called a privation of the image of God, and original sin. But we allow this point to be made the subject of discussion: besides the want or absence of original righteousness, may not some other contrary

quality be constituted as another part of original sin? We think it is more probable that this absence alone of original righteousness is original sin itself, since it alone is sufficient for the commission and production of every actual sin whatever."

The scriptural view of the subject is, that Adam by sin forfeited the gift of the Holy Spirit for himself and his posterity, and this privation, as a necessary consequence, resulted in the loss of holiness, happiness, and every spiritual good, together with real involvement in all the evil implied in spiritual death. As death, with putrefaction and corruption, flows directly from the privation of natural life, so moral evil or depravity immediately and necessarily results from the absence of spiritual life. So we perceive there was no necessity for the direct infusion of moral evil by the Almighty. It was only requisite for the Holy Spirit to be withdrawn, and moral evil, like a mighty torrent when the floodgate is lifted, deluged and overwhelmed the soul.

The following, upon the subject of the "retraction of God's Spirit from Adam," is from Mr. Howe: "This we do not say gratuitously; for do but consider that plain text, Gal. iii. 13: 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' If the remission of the curse carry with it the conferring of the grace of the Spirit, then the curse, while it did continue, could not but include and carry in it the privation of the Spirit. This was part of the curse upon apostate Adam—the loss of God's Spirit. As soon as the law was broken, man was cursed, so as that thereby the Spirit should be withheld—should be kept off otherwise than as upon the Redeemer's account, and according to his methods it should be restored. Hereupon it could not but ensue that the holy image of God must be erased and vanished."

We conclude upon this point with the following quotation from Mr. Watson's Institutes. Speaking of Adam, he says: "He did sin, and the Spirit retired; and the tide of sin once turned in, the mound of resistance being removed, it overflowed his whole nature. In this state of alienation from God, men are born with all these tendencies to evil, because the only controlling and sanctifying power—the presence of the Spirit—is wanting, and is now given to man, not as when first brought into being as a *creature*, but is secured to him by the mercy and grace of a new and different dispensation, under which the Spirit is administered in different degrees, times, and modes, according to the wisdom of God, never on the ground of our being creatures,

but as redeemed from the curse of the law by him who became a curse for us."

II. In the next place, it is objected to this doctrine that "As we have souls immediately from God, if we are born sinful, he must either create sinful souls, which cannot be supposed without impiety, or send sinless souls into sinful bodies, to be defiled by the unhappy union, which is as inconsistent with his goodness as his justice. Add to this, that nothing can be more unphilosophical than to suppose that a body—a mere lump of organized matter—is able to communicate to a pure spirit that moral pollution of which itself is as incapable as the murderer's sword is incapable of cruelty."

To this objection we reply, that however weighty it may have been considered by many, it rests entirely upon a vulgar assumption, which cannot be sustained, viz., that we have our souls immediately from God by *infusion*. That such is not the fact, but that they descend from Adam by *traduction*, we are led to believe from the following considerations:

1. It is said that God "rested on the seventh day from all his work" of creation; consequently it is unreasonable to suppose that he is still engaged in the *creation* of *souls*, as the *bodies* of mankind multiply upon earth.

2. Eve was originally *created in Adam*. God made Adam of the "dust of the ground," and infused into his body a living soul; but when Eve was afterward produced, she was not properly created: she was made of a part of Adam's body, and there is no account of God's breathing into her the breath of life, as in the case of Adam. She was called *woman* because she was taken out of man. Now, as Eve derived her nature, *soul and body*, from Adam, why may not the souls of his posterity descend from him?

3. If we do not derive our souls by natural descent, neither can we thus derive the life of our bodies, for "the *body* without the *spirit* is *dead*."

4. We read in Gen. v. 3, that fallen "Adam begat a son *in his own likeness, after his image*." Adam was a fallen, *embodied spirit;* such also must have been his son, or he could not have been "in his own likeness."

5. Our Saviour said to Nicodemus: "That which is born of the *flesh* is *flesh*." We have in another place shown that by the term *flesh* here in the latter instance, we are to understand our fallen, sinful nature. If so, it must include the soul. Again, it is written, "Ye must be *born again*." Now, if the soul is not born with the body, how can its reno-

vation in conversion be called being "*born again?*" Surely the *body* is not "born again" in conversion.

Some have thought that the doctrine of the traduction of human souls tends to Materialism. "But this arises," says Mr. Watson, "from a mistaken view of that in which the procreation of a human being lies, which does not consist in the production out of nothing of either of the parts of which the compounded being, man, is constituted, but in the uniting them substantially with one another." Since, therefore, the *traduction* of the human soul is more rational and scriptural than its *immediate creation*, the objection to the doctrine of the native pollution of the soul, which we have been considering, is shown to be groundless.

We need not be told that the view here taken of this subject involves mysteries. This we admit. But is it therefore erroneous? Who can understand the mysteries of the new birth? and yet we receive the doctrine as true. Why, then, should we reject the doctrine of the natural descent of the soul, merely because we cannot comprehend how it is that all the *souls* as well as the *bodies* of his posterity were created in Adam, from whom they are derived by descent?

III. In the third place, the doctrine of the native total depravity of man has been objected to from the fact that *there is frequently to be found much moral good in unregenerate men.*

In reply to this, we observe, that all the good claimed with justice as belonging to unregenerate men, can be satisfactorily accounted for without denying that all men are by nature totally depraved.

1. There may be much seeming good, much negative virtue, in society, originating from the fact that many of the various vices of mankind, from their very nature, to some extent *counteract each other.* Thus the passion of avarice may lead to the practice of industry. The love of fame may lead to acts of ostentatious benevolence, etc., but in such cases the principle of action is not spiritually good.

2. Selfish motives may frequently lead to acts of seeming virtue; a mere love of self-interest induces many to endeavor to secure for themselves a good character on account of the standing and influence which it will give them in society; all this may be perfectly consistent with the view we have presented of the native corruption of the soul.

3. In the next place, the character of man may appear much better than it really is, merely because surrounding circumstances have not called into open action the latent principles of the soul. The seed of evil may be there, but it may not come forth and exhibit itself, merely because those exciting causes calculated to call it forth to action have not been brought to bear.

4. But lastly, that acts really praiseworthy, and founded upon principles not wholly corrupt, have frequently been performed by the unregenerate, we are compelled to admit. But all this can be satisfactorily and fully explained without impugning the doctrine of total depravity. We are not left entirely to ourselves, and to the unbridled influence of our corrupt nature. Through the atonement of Christ, a day of grace is given to men, the Holy Spirit is sent to visit the hearts of sinners, "dead in trespasses and sins," and the "true light lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" so that all that is spiritually and really good in principle among men, is to be attributed, not to nature, but to grace. It comes not through the *first*, but the *second* Adam.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XII.

Question 1. In what respect has it been said that the doctrine of total depravity makes God the author of sin?
2. How is this objection answered?
3. How is this doctrine objected to from the supposition that we receive our souls immediately from God, by infusion?
4. How is the objection answered?
5. By what evidence is the natural descent of souls sustained?
6. How is the doctrine of depravity objected to from the fact that there is much moral good among unregenerate men?
7. How is this objection answered?

CHAPTER XIII.

DEPRAVITY — OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED — MORAL STATE AND LEGAL RELATION OF INFANTS.

It has been objected that the doctrine of innate depravity is *inconsistent with the principles of a righteous administration in the case of infants.*

The objection now presented has, perhaps, been more earnestly and repeatedly urged, and more confidently relied upon, by the advocates of the *native innocence and purity of man*, than any other. And as a proper understanding of the character and condition of *infants* is so vitally essential to a correct view of the entire doctrine of human depravity, we shall devote this chapter to the investigation of that interesting topic. The following are the principal theories which have been advocated upon this subject:

1. That infants are born perfectly innocent and holy.

2. That they are born without any moral character whatever, and alike indifferent to good and evil.

3. That they are born with a strong bias to evil, though not totally corrupt.

4. That they are born in a state of sinfulness and guilt, amounting to total depravity; and that, notwithstanding the atonement of Christ, some of them, dying in infancy, may perish everlastingly.

5. That they are born in a state of unholiness, but, through the atonement of Christ, in a state of justification or innocence, and that, if they die in infancy, they will be infallibly saved.

6. That they are born in a state of pollution and guilt, but that, through the atonement of Christ, all who die in infancy will infallibly be saved.

It will be readily perceived that while the difference between some of these theories is very slight, between others it is vastly important. In this place we remark, that what we conceive to be the true Scripture doctrine is contained in the last-mentioned theory. The first, viz., that "infants are born perfectly innocent and holy," is the doctrine of Pelagians, Socinians, and Unitarians generally, and has already been sufficiently refuted.

The second, viz., that they are born "without any moral character whatever, and alike indifferent to good and evil," and the third, viz., that "they are born with a strong bias to evil, though not totally corrupt," have both had their advocates among semi-Pelagians, Socinians, Unitarians, and some of the New School Presbyterians of the United States, and have already been sufficiently refuted.

The fourth, viz., that "they are born in a state of sinfulness and guilt, amounting to total depravity, and that, notwithstanding the atonement of Christ, some of them, dying in infancy, may perish everlastingly," has been advocated by none but predestinarians. The latter branch of this theory, which avows the possibility of infants perishing everlastingly, is the only portion of it inconsistent with what we conceive to be the Scripture doctrine; and it shall presently be considered.

The fifth, viz., that "they are born in a state of unholiness, but, through the atonement of Christ, in a state of justification or innocence, and that, if they die in infancy, they will infallibly be saved," has been advocated by some Arminian divines. That part of this theory, which avows the *native innocence* or *justification* of infants, is the only portion of it which we conceive to be erroneous, and it will be presently considered.

The sixth, viz., that "they are born in a state of pollution and *legal* guilt, but that, through the atonement of Christ, all who die in infancy will infallibly be saved," has been advocated by the leading divines of the Arminian school, and contains what we believe to be the Scripture doctrine; and so far as it differs from the fourth and fifth theories, we shall proceed to its investigation.

Observe here, that so far as this theory differs from the first, second, and third theories, it has already been considered in the investigation of the doctrine of innate total depravity; therefore its discrepancy with the fourth and fifth theories is all that is now before us. It differs from the fourth theory in that it avows the *infallible salvation of all who die in infancy.* It differs from the fifth theory in that it avows the *native legal guilt of infants,* in opposition to their *native innocence or justification.* We will attend to these two points in order.

I. We shall endeavor to show that *all who die in infancy will infallibly be saved.*

The possibility of the eternal destruction of any who die in infancy is so directly at war with what we conceive to be the character of the divine attributes, and so shocking to the human feelings, that it is really astonishing that the sentiment should ever have received the least coun-

tenance. Few, indeed, even of those whose general system of theology required it, have had the hardihood openly to avow it; yet it has had some bold and confident defenders.

In the "Westminster Confession of Faith," the standard of the Presbyterians of the United States, we find the following declaration: "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth." Here, although the possibility of infants perishing is not fully expressed, yet it appears to us to be clearly implied. To speak of "elect infants," necessarily implies that there are reprobate infants; for if all infants were "elect," the term *elect* in the passage would be superfluous and unmeaning. But the sentiments avowed in other parts of the same book clearly teach that there are reprobate infants. Election and reprobation, according to the whole Calvinistic scheme, are eternal and unconditional; consequently all who ever sustain the charater of elect or reprobate must do so even in infancy. Again, as the salvation of "elect infants" is here specified, the idea is clearly implied that none others are saved.

That such is the view taken by at least some of the leading authors of the Calvinistic school, we see from the following language of Dr. George Hill, in his Lectures, Book IV., Ch. i.: "In what manner the mercy of God will dispose hereafter of those infants who die in consequence of Adam's sin, without having done any evil, the Scriptures have not declared; and it does not become us to say more than is said in the excellent words of our Confession of Faith." He then repeats the words from the Confession as above quoted.

Here observe, that although the author appears to shrink from a direct avowal of his sentiments, yet we can be at no loss to determine them from his own language. He was a Presbyterian, and here quotes with approbation the standard of his own Church, which we have seen implies the possibility—yea, the certainty—of some infants being not saved. Yet it must be confessed that the author, in the short quotation made from him, indirectly contradicts himself. He first affirms: "In what manner the mercy of God will dispose of those infants who die in consequence of Adam's sin, without having done any evil, *the Scriptures have not declared.*" He then quotes, with commendation, the language of the Confession of Faith, which, as we have seen, does expressly declare what disposition shall be made of one portion, and clearly implies what disposition shall be made of the other portion. Thus it is clear that the horrible doctrine of the *eternal damnation of infants* has had manifest favor with at least some of the most eminent predestinarians,

although they have generally faltered, felt themselves trammeled, and fallen into inconsistency and self-contradiction, when they have spoken upon the subject.

In the outset, we confess that the Scriptures nowhere declare, in *express and direct terms*, that all who die in infancy shall infallibly be saved. But this cannot be urged as a proof that the doctrine is not there plainly taught. The Scriptures nowhere declare, in *express and direct terms*, that there is a God; but who will venture to affirm that the existence of God is not therein plainly taught? Indirect and inferential testimony is frequently as powerful and convincing as a direct asseveration possibly can be. Indeed, there are some truths, both in science and religion, so obviously implied and so deeply interwoven in the whole system with which they stand connected, that a direct affirmation of them would be a work of supererogation. Such is evidently the being of God above referred to. But so far from the Scripture evidence upon that subject being impaired by the absence of a direct affirmation, it derives additional strength and majesty from that very circumstance. The same observation will be correct in reference to the eternal salvation of all who die in infancy. This is so clearly implied in the very nature of the divine attributes and administration, and in the whole tenor of Scripture, that the inspired penmen have not stopped to affirm it in direct terms. But that the Scriptures do teach this doctrine in an indirect, though clear and forcible manner, we may readily see.

1. St. Peter declares that "God is no respecter of persons." This may be taken as a brief illustration and comment upon the divine character and government, as we see them exhibited in the Scriptures. And were there no other text upon the subject, this is sufficient to prove the doctrine in question, our opponents themselves being judges. Now observe, it is admitted on all hands that some who die in infancy are saved; then it will follow that if a moral difference in the character of infants is not such as to justify so great a disparity in the divine procedure with them as to send the one to happiness and the other to perdition, *all* must inevitably be saved, or God is a "respecter of persons," contrary to the text. That the moral character of infants is the same, is an undeniable fact. Therefore we must admit the salvation of all who die in infancy, or flatly deny the above scripture.

2. Take the doctrine and arguments of St. Paul, in the fifth chapter to the Romans where he contrasts the consequences of Adam's sin with the benefits of the atonement of Christ, and you will find it impossible to understand his language unless you admit the truth of the doctrine for which we now contend. The apostle there shows that the benefits

of redemption are coëxtensive with, yea, even surpass, the miseries of the Fall. How could this be, if some who are injured by the Fall are never benefited by Christ? And in what way can the infant, who dies and sinks to eternal destruction, be benefited by Christ? In the 18th verse of that chapter, we read: "Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came upon *all men to condemnation;* even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon *all men unto justification of life.*" Here, if "all men," in the first instance, includes the whole human family, so it must in the last instance. The terms are the same, and evidently used in the same sense. If this verse means any thing at all, it means that all who fell in Adam are provisionally restored in Christ. That all are actually and immediately justified, cannot be the meaning. Adults are not justified till they repent and believe; but the provision is made for the actual justification of all, according to certain terms, unless they themselves reject it by a voluntary refusal to comply with the condition. Infants cannot reject the provision; therefore, if they die in infancy, their actual justification and salvation must infallibly be completed. But, I ask, how can the infant, upon the supposition that it dies and sinks to ruin, be properly said to have been benefited by the remedial scheme? How can it be said that the "free gift" came upon such, (εἰς) "unto," or in order to, justification of life? Surely we have in this passage indubitable, though indirect, proof of the eternal salvation of all who die in infancy.

Many other proofs of a kindred character might be adduced, but we deem them unnecessary. It will follow, from what has been above presented, that the doctrine of innate total depravity involves no difficulty in the divine administration in reference to infants, so far as their eternal destiny is concerned. Let the Fall be viewed in connection with the atonement. The merciful provision coëxisted with the miseries of the curse; and as the hand of justice fell upon man to crush him, the hand of mercy was outstretched to redeem and save.

II. We now enter upon the investigation of that portion of the theory we have adopted which avows the *native legal guilt* of infants, in opposition to their *native legal justification or innocence.*

It has already been observed that some Arminian divines, who acknowledge the native moral pollution or unholiness of infants, contend, nevertheless, that through the atonement of Christ they are born in a state of *justification* or *perfect innocence;* and consequently that they are in no sense of the word guilty. The theory which we have presented not only contends that they are born unholy, but also that they are born *legally guilty.* Perhaps the difference of sentiment

here may consist more in the definition of the term *guilt* than in the subject itself; but so intimate is the connection of this subject with the important doctrine of human depravity, and so powerful its bearing upon the great subject of the atonement, and the entire scheme of redemption, that great pains should be taken to be perfectly correct, even in the use of terms. A slight error here may almost imperceptibly lead to the pernicious principles of Pelagianism.

1. The simple question which we now discuss is this: Are infants, *in any sense of the word, guilty?* We adopt the affirmative. But first, we inquire for the definition of the terms *guilt* and *justification*, as these terms, in the subject before us, stand opposed to each other. According to Webster and other lexicographers, one definition of *guilt* is "exposure to forfeiture or other penalty;" and one definition of justification is, "remission of sin and absolution from guilt and punishment." These definitions, we think, have not only been sanctioned by orthodox divines in general, but are in accordance with the Scripture representation of the subject.

With the understanding of the terms here presented, if it can be shown that infants are exposed to any kind of "forfeiture, or any other penalty" of any kind whatever, it will appear that they are guilty. As justification, in theology, is properly taken for the opposite of guilt, it will follow that if infants are justified, in the full sense of the word, they cannot be guilty, in any sense of the word; but, on the other hand, if there is any sense of the word in which they are not justified, in the same sense, they must be guilty. Now, that they are not *personally or actually guilty*, or guilty in any sense of the word, so as to be personally accountable to God in judgment, or in danger of future and eternal punishment, we freely admit. Therefore the only question now in dispute is simply this: Are infants guilty, according to the Scriptures, in the view of *the law and government of God*, as a consequence of original sin visited upon them from Adam? This is the only and the plain point at issue. In the light of Scripture and reason, we proceed to examine the question.

In Ps. li. 5, we read: "Behold, I was shapen in *iniquity;* and in *sin* did my mother conceive me." On this verse, Dr. Clarke says: "I believe David to speak here of what is commonly called *original sin.*" The advocates for the native innocence of infants are reduced to the necessity of flatly contradicting this text, or, what is little better, the strange absurdity of asserting that both sin and iniquity may exist without *guilt*, and be reconciled with *perfect innocence.* Farther still, they must either reject Dr. Clarke's comment, or admit that guilt is

implied in original sin. In Isa. liii. 6, we read: "The Lord hath laid on him the *iniquity* of us *all*." On this verse, Dr. Clarke says: "The Lord hath caused to meet in him the punishment due to the iniquities of all."

Here, if we say that infants are not included, we are reduced to the absurdity of saying that *all* only means *a part;* but, what is far worse, we are driven into Pelagianism; for if the punishment due to the original sin attached to infants was not laid upon Christ, he never died for them, and, sure enough, they may safely be left without a Redeemer! But if it be said that infants are included in this passage, then are they legally guilty; for their "*iniquity* was laid upon Christ." But if we still deny their guilt, we are reduced to the absurdity of saying that here is iniquity, and that, too, requiring punishment, and yet, how passing strange, *this iniquity is free from guilt, and consistent with perfect innocence!*

The state of the case then, if we deny absolutely the guilt of infants, would be this: infants are involved in sin and iniquity so heinous that its punishment was laid upon Christ, and yet so inoffensive as not to imply *guilt in any sense, but perfect innocence!* It is clear that if Christ suffered for infants at all, it was either for their *guilt* or their *innocence.* There can be no medium: wherever there is no guilt, there is perfect innocence. Then, if we deny the guilt of infants, if Christ suffered for them at all, it was for their perfect innocence; and, if so, his sufferings in their case were useless, for a perfectly innocent being never could have suffered eternal torment, even if there had been no atonement. Yea, we may say more: a perfectly innocent being can never be punished at all, unless that punishment be accompanied by a counterbalancing reward.

In Rom. iii. 19, 23, we read: "That every mouth may be stopped, and *all the world* may become *guilty* before God;" and "*All have sinned,* and come short of the glory of God." On these passages, Dr. Clarke uses these words: "Both Jews and Gentiles stand convicted before God, for all mankind have sinned against this law." He afterward adds: "And consequently are equally helpless and guilty." Here, unless we say that "all the world," and "all mankind," only mean a part, we are compelled to admit the guilt of infants; otherwise we contradict both the commentator and the apostle, for they both expressly use the word *guilty.*

It is, indeed, a matter of astonishment, that any one can read the fifth chapter of Romans, and not be convinced that all mankind, of every age, are held as sinful and guilty in consequence of the disobedience of

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Adam. On the 14th verse, Dr. Clarke uses these words: "In or through Adam, *guilt* came upon all men." Here, again, we have our choice, to acknowledge the guilt of infants, or contradict both the text and commentator. In the 18th verse of this chapter, "all men" are said to be brought under "condemnation" for "the offense of one." If infants are included in "all men," then are they brought under condemnation for the sin of Adam; and if so, then are they held guilty for the sin of Adam. Our only escape from this conclusion is to say that "condemnation" does not imply *guilt*, but may consist with *perfect innocence*.

2. That the views we have expressed in relation to the hereditary guilt of infants are in accordance with the opinion of Mr. Wesley, and the leading and standard authors among his followers, we will now show by a few quotations.

First, from Wesley, "On Original Sin," we make a few extracts—they were either original with him, or fully indorsed by him. "The death expressed in the original threatening, and implied in the sentence pronounced upon man, includes all evils which could befall his soul and body; death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal." (Page 75.) "No just constitution can punish the *innocent;* therefore God does not look upon infants as innocent, but as involved in the *guilt* of Adam's sin. Otherwise death, the punishment denounced against that sin, could not be inflicted upon them." (Page 171.) "However, then, the sufferings wherein Adam's sin has involved his whole posterity, may try and purify us, in order to future and everlasting happiness, this circumstance does not alter their nature; they are punishments still." (Page 173.) "Where there is no sin, either personal or imputed, there can be no suffering." (Page 185.) "Death did not come upon them (infants) as a mere natural effect of their father Adam's sin and death, but as a proper and legal punishment of sin; for it is said, his sin brought condemnation upon all men. Now, this is a legal term, and shows that death is not only a natural but a penal evil, and comes upon infants as guilty and condemned, not for their own actual sins, for they had none, but for the sin of Adam, their legal head, their appointed representative." (Page 259.) "If, notwithstanding this, all mankind in all ages have died, infants themselves, who cannot actually sin, not excepted, it is undeniable that guilt is imputed to all for the sin of Adam. Why else are they liable to that which is inflicted on none but for sin?" (Page 323.)

The following we quote from Fletcher's Appeal: "If we are naturally innocent, we have a natural power to remain so, and by a proper

use of it we may avoid standing in need of the salvation procured by Christ for the lost." (Page 123.)

The following we extract from the second Part of Watson's Institutes: "The fact of (infants) being born liable to death, a part of the penalty, is sufficient to show that they were born under the whole malediction." (Ch. xviii.) "This free gift is bestowed upon all men (εἰς) *in order to* justification of life." (Ch. xviii.) "As to infants, they are not indeed born justified and regenerate; so that to say that original sin is taken away as to infants, by Christ, is not the correct view of the case." (Ch. xviii.) "It may well be matter of surprise, that the natural innocence of human nature should ever have had its advocates." (Ch. xviii.) "The full penalty of Adam's offense passed upon his posterity." (Ch. xviii.) "A full provision to meet this case is, indeed, as we have seen, made in the gospel; but that does not affect the state in which men are born. It is a cure for an actual existing disease, brought by us into the world; for, were not this the case, the evangelical institution would be one of prevention, not of remedy, under which light it is always represented." (Ch. xviii.) "Pain and death are the consequences only of sin, and absolutely innocent beings must be exempt from them." (Ch. xviii.) "The death and sufferings to which children are subject, is a proof that all men, from their birth, are 'constituted,' as the apostle has it, and treated, as 'sinners.'" (Ch. xviii.) "This benefit did not so come upon all men as to relieve them immediately from the sentence of death. As this is the case with adults, so, for this reason, it did not come immediately upon children, whether they die in infancy or not." (Ch. xviii.) "The guilt of Adam's sin is charged upon his whole posterity." (Ch. xxiii.)

3. In the next place, we notice some of the difficulties connected with the doctrine of the *perfect innocence* of infants, which doctrine has, indeed, been the fountain of many of the most pernicious heresies in the successive ages of the Church.

1. It avows the principle that the stream is more perfect than the fountain whence it emanates. That we derive our nature, compound as it is, by descent, or natural generation, from Adam, all must admit. Adam, previously to this, had fallen; his nature was sinful and guilty; but if he imparted an innocent nature to his posterity, the stream must rise in perfection above its fountain. This not only involves an absurdity, but an express contradiction of the word of God; for we there read: "Adam begat a son in *his own likeness* and after *his image;*" consequently, if his nature was guilty, so must have been that of his descendants.

2. It destroys the connection between cause and effect, and thus saps

the foundation of all philosophy and reason. That death is the effect of sin and guilt, the Scriptures plainly declare. Now, if all guilt is taken away from infants, the effect of guilt exists in their case without a cause; nor can it, on Bible principles, be accounted for.

3. It overturns a radical and essential principle in the divine government—which is, that the guilty, and not the innocent, are proper subjects of legal punishment. Now, if infants are perfectly innocent, it follows, as they are legally punished with death, that the just principles of government are destroyed.

4. It strikes at the foundation of the doctrine of redemption. For if infants are *perfectly innocent*, Christ came not to save them; he came "to save sinners."

I know that the effort has been made to counterbalance all these arguments, by starting such objections as the following:—

(1) It is said that brutes suffer death; and we are asked, Are they guilty? We reply, Most assuredly they are, in the sense of imputation. On account of Adam's sin, they suffer the forfeiture of their original state of happiness, and lie under the penalty of death; and this, according to the lexicographers and the tenor of Scripture, is guilt.

(2) It is objected that justified, and even sanctified, Christians suffer death; and we are asked, Are they, in any sense of the word, guilty? We reply, Yes. They may be justified, and even sanctified, in the Spirit, but sin and guilt attach to the *body* as well as the *soul*. Soul and body were united in the transgression, and upon this compound nature the penalty fell. It is guilt that will slay the body in death, and confine it in the tomb. From this part of the sentence of condemnation the resurrection alone can free us. This is one sense in which Christ was "raised again for our *justification*."

(3) It is objected that it is absurd to say that an individual not actually guilty, should be made so, in view of the law, for the act of another. To which we reply, that it is no more absurd than that he should be made a *sinner* for the act of another; and the Scripture affirms that "by the *offense of one, many were made sinners*." This might appear absurd and unjust, were it disconnected with redemption, but such is an improper view; for had it not been for the provisions of redemption, none but the first unfortunate pair ever could have had a *personal* existence.

(4) It is objected that "although infants would be guilty, independent of redemption, yet Christ has removed their guilt, and they are all born innocent, by virtue of his atonement."

This objection has great weight with some, and, at first view, appears quite plausible; but upon close inspection it will vanish. What can this objection mean? "Infants would be guilty, independent of redemption." Strange, indeed! Independent of redemption, they never could have existed; and who can comprehend a *guilty nonentity?* If they were only guilty as they existed seminally in Adam, then were they only redeemed as they existed seminally in Adam; for none but sinners needed redemption. According to this, it would follow that, after all, none were redeemed but the first pair; for none others were involved in the guilt.

But if it still be urged that "the atonement has removed the guilt of infants," we simply ask, Has the atonement removed that which never existed? If infants are not, and never have been, guilty, it is clear that their guilt never could have been removed. The apostle does not say, "By one man's disobedience many" would have been made sinners, had it not been for the atonement; but he says, "Many were made sinners." Now, if it be said that they were only made sinners seminally, as they existed in Adam, we reply, that in the same sense they all disobeyed in Adam. Hence, according to this theory, the apostle should have said, (to have spoken intelligibly,) either, By one man's disobedience, one man was made a sinner, or, By the disobedience of many, many were made sinners. If it was only seminally that they were made sinners, seminally they actually disobeyed; and thus, according to this notion, the number that disobeyed was precisely equal to the number made sinners; and thus the apostle's beautiful argument is reduced to nonsense. To maintain a darling theory, must we be required to make such havoc with Scripture?

Again, look at Rom. v. 18: "By the offense of *one*, judgment came upon *all men* to condemnation." Can any believe that the apostle was here teaching us that all men were only condemned seminally, as they existed in Adam? If the condemnation was only theirs seminally, the offense also was theirs seminally, and it is nonsense to say of the "offense" that it was "by one man," but of the "condemnation," that it was "upon all men;" for, according to this theory, "all men" *offended* in the same sense in which they were *condemned.*

The atonement, as such, made no sinner immediately and absolutely righteous. The blood of Christ does not apply itself to the soul of man. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to "take of the things of Christ, and show them unto us." By the atonement of Christ, the "free gift" comes upon "all men," not to justify them immediately and unconditionally, but *in order to* justification of life—that is, the provision is

made, the blood has been shed, and, according to God's plan, the Spirit applies it to the justification, not of those who always have been righteous, but of the ungodly. The adult is justified by faith when he is born again. The infant is not required to believe; but if it die in infancy, the Spirit of God can create it anew, and fully justify and prepare it for heaven.

Special attention should be given to the scope of the apostle's argument in the fifth chapter to the Romans. It runs thus: Death passes upon all men; therefore all are guilty; and if all are thus seen to be guilty, he draws the conclusion that all alike need redemption, and that the "free gift has come" alike upon "*all.*" If his argument proves all men to be sinners at all, it proves them to be such at the time death passes upon them. Hence it is plain that the notion that infants are made perfectly innocent through Christ, before they were ever made guilty, or before they existed, or as soon as they began to exist, is both absurd and unscriptural.

Finally, we remark, if infants are only saved from becoming guilty sinners through Christ, then he is not their Redeemer from sin, but only a *preventer.* He does not deliver from disease, but only stands in the way to prevent its approach.

If infants are not by nature guilty, under the sentence of the divine law, then it will follow that justification may be by works; (which is contrary to the apostle's doctrine;) for the evangelical obedience under the gospel is not such as is impossible to be complied with; and if it be possible to comply with the evangelical requirements of the gospel, then, as there is no previous charge or ground of condemnation, it is possible for an individual to be justified by his own works.

If it be attempted to evade this by saying that infants were guilty, but that Christ has removed that condemnation, so that they are born in a justified state; to this we reply, How can any thing be affirmed or denied of that which has no existence? What kind of a condemnation is that which is pronounced against a being which never had any existence? and what kind of a justification is that which implies the removal of condemnation from a being which does not and never did exist? Indeed, such a supposititious condemnation and justification are absurd. For, if the being condemned had no existence at the time, the condemnation could have had no existence; for no attribute, quality, or condition, can exist separate from the thing of which it is affirmed. And if the condemnation had no existence, the justification which removed it could have had no existence. Thus it appears that the notion that infants were condemned and justified both, before they had any exist-

ence, and that consequently they are born in a justified state, is an absurd fiction.

But if it still be insisted that Christ redeems infants from the sin and guilt which they would have inherited from Adam but for the atonement, then it follows that Christ is only an *imaginary* Saviour, effecting *imaginary* redemption for *imaginary* sinners; and thus the whole scheme is reduced to a farce, and the very atonement itself is uprooted, and shown to be *imaginary!* We choose rather to abide by the plain Scripture, and look upon this notion of the *perfect innocence* of infants, and deliverance from guilt that never existed, as obviously untenable.

Another theory, somewhat different from any we have named, has been advocated by a few reputable Arminian divines. It has been espoused by Dr. F. G. Hibbard in his recent treatise on "The Religion of Childhood." So far as we can perceive, this theory takes the scriptural view of the doctrine of depravity in the abstract—admitting it to be both *total* and *hereditary.*

This theory, in reference to the moral state of infants, is so nearly related to Pelagianism, that it is difficult to discern wherein they *substantially* differ. It teaches that *all infants, at the first moment of their existence, are freed from all sin and guilt, and made partakers of regeneration.*

Pelagius taught that *the moral state of infants is the same with that of Adam before the Fall*—that is, that infants inherit no corruption or guilt from Adam, but are born as sinless and holy as he was when first created. The theory to which we now refer, differs from Pelagianism, in that it admits that all infants inherit guilt and corruption from Adam; but avers that the atonement of Christ is so immediately applied to them that, at the first moment of their existence, all that sin and pollution are removed, so that they are holy and regenerate as soon as they begin to exist.

Thus, it seems to us, that while this theory differs greatly from Pelagianism, because it attributes the gracious state of infants to the atonement of Christ, yet it so harmonizes with the Pelagian theory concerning the *moral state* of infants, that, in that particular, there is scarce a shade of difference between them. This theory does not exactly teach, like Pelagianism, that infants are *born* pure and sinless; but that they are so constituted at the first moment of their existence—that is, though they derive from their connection with Adam condemnation and death, yet, by reason of the atonement, the entire malediction of the Fall is removed from them—as Dr. Hibbard expresses it, "coincident with the date of existence—at the moment they become

human." Hence it appears that on this point the theory in question differs from Pelagianism only by the measure of *a moment—an instant of time!* Of what avail for good or evil can be that native guilt and depravity which, the moment they come upon, or are about to come upon, the infant, are removed? How can native depravity, under such circumstances, tend to corrupt the heart or vitiate the life? And, on this point, how can the theory in question maintain longer than a single moment any vantage-ground over Pelagianism?

Again, this theory, to our mind, involves a palpable *self-contradiction.* It maintains that all infants are involved in condemnation for Adam's sin, but that this condemnation is removed as soon as they begin to exist. Now, we ask, how can they be condemned before they exist? Or how can that be removed which never existed? If infants inherit a depraved and guilty nature, it cannot be before they have a nature, nor can they possess a nature before they have an existence. And if, *at the first moment of their existence,* they are perfectly innocent and regenerate through Christ, *when* were they condemned and unregenerate through Adam? Was it *before* they had an existence? If so, what conception are we to form of a condemned, unregenerate nonentity?

It has been argued by the advocates of the theory we here oppose, that "if the grace and gift of righteousness are only a title to life, and not a present personal inception of life, then also, by the conditions of the argument and the law of antithesis upon which it rests, the death spoken of (Rom. v.) must be only a *liability* of death—a death in prospect—not a personal present fact and experience." To this we reply, that if the antithesis of the apostle requires that, because the *death* is *real, personal,* and *experimental,* so must be the *life;* then, upon the same mode of reasoning, if the *life* is *real, personal,* and *experimental,* so must be the *death.* But, according to the theory, where shall we find the *real, personal,* and *experimental death* from which infants are delivered by the atonement? The theory gives them the "life" in question *as soon as they exist—the moment they become human.* When did they have *personal experience* of the antithetic "death?" Was it *before* they had an existence? This hypothesis is absurd. Was it *after* they had existence, and *before* they had *life?* This is impossible, according to the theory, for it teaches that they possess the antithetic "life" *the first moment of their existence.* Could they personally experience this "life" and "death" (antithetically opposed to each other) at the same moment? This would be a contradiction. Hence, according to the very reasoning brought to sustain the theory, it is plainly overthrown. For if the "life," the perfect innocence, the regeneration, possessed by

the infant the first moment of its existence, is a *real, personal, experimental* realization, so must be the "death" from which it is a deliverance. If the one is a *personal experience*, the other cannot be supposed to have only a *conceptual* existence.

Again, Dr. Hibbard says (page 121): "The justification covers all the condemned, and reverses the 'judgment' which stands against us at the first moment, when it would otherwise take effect."

Here is a plain admission that, according to this theory, the atonement of Christ only delivers the infant world, not from *actual, experimental, personal* death, but from *conceptual* death—that is, it is a *real, actual* salvation from *ideal, imaginary,* or *conceptual* evil. The reversed judgment had not actually taken effect. It is reversed "at the first moment, when it would otherwise take effect."

Once more: the theory under review, while it admits in words the doctrine of native depravity, does, in effect, set it aside. The advocates of the theory admit that, "had it not been for mediatorial interposition, no child of Adam would have been born, and the consequences of the first transgression would have terminated on the first guilty pair." From this it follows that we are indebted to the atonement for our very being, and all our faculties of whatever kind. Hence it must be admitted that if perfect innocence and regeneration belong to our nature, as soon as we have a nature, (as the theory teaches,) they must belong to that nature as soon as do the faculties of sight and hearing, or any native faculty we possess. And if these faculties or qualities—sight, hearing, innocence, regeneration—all flow through the atonement, and come to us at the same time—*as soon as we exist*—why is not the one as *natural* as the others? If we are *by nature* possessed of sight and hearing, are we not *by nature* possessed of perfect innocence and regeneration? If all begin as soon as we possess a nature, and flow from the same source, how can any of them be acquired or superinduced? Are they not all *equally natural?* And if so, are we not as *naturally* innocent and regenerate beings as we are hearing, seeing, breathing, or living beings? Hence, how can we be *naturally* sinful and unholy? In other words, how can the doctrine of native human depravity be true? We do not charge the advocates of the theory here opposed with denying the doctrine of man's native depravity. They intend no such thing. We only advance the opinion that their theory and the doctrine of the native depravity of human nature are logically irreconcilable.

Thus have we endeavored to show that the doctrine of innate total depravity, as connected with the character of infants, is consistent with the nature of the divine administration.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XIII.

QUESTION 1. What are the different theories presented in reference to infants?

2. Who have advocated the first?
3. The second?
4. The third?
5. The fourth?
6. The fifth?
7. The sixth?
8. Which theory best accords with the Bible?
9. In what does the sixth differ from the fourth?
10. In what does it differ from the fifth?
11. Who have believed in the destruction of infants?
12. From what quotations is this made to appear?
13. What is the proof that all infants will be saved?
14. What is the definition of *guilt* and *justification*?
15. What scriptures are brought to prove the *native guilt* of infants?
16. From what divines are quotations brought?
17. What are the *four* difficulties named in reference to the doctrine of the perfect innocence of infants?
18. In what way are brutes referred to, in objecting to the doctrine of the guilt of infants?
19. How is this objection answered?
20. How is the objection answered in reference to the death of justified and sanctified Christians?
21. How is the objection, that it is absurd to make the innocent guilty for the act of another, answered?
22. How is the objection, that the guilt of infants has already been removed through the atonement, answered?
23. What scripture is used in answering this objection?

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MORAL AGENCY OF MAN.

THE subject now before us—*the moral agency of man*—is one of great interest and importance. It has been said by an excellent writer, that "The proper study of mankind is man." If this is true, as it unquestionably is, when the terms are understood to relate to the true character, moral relations, and eternal destiny of man, it is likewise true that no question ever agitated in relation to man can be of greater interest than the one now proposed—his proper moral agency.

This subject has elicited a large amount of philosophical research from the most acute metaphysicians in every age of the world, from the earliest date of philosophical science to the present day. It has presented an arena on which the master-spirits have met, and wielded with their utmost skill the keenest lance of polemic strife; but perhaps the most that has been written on the subject has tended rather to involve the matter in a maze of metaphysical intricacy, than to present the simple truth in a plain light. Could the public mind be disabused respecting the influence of the fine-spun theories, metaphysical reasonings, and endless quibbles of speculative minds, in reference to free will, moral agency, fixed fate, and philosophical necessity, it might be possible, in a small compass, to present a clear and satisfactory view of the subject in hand. As it is, we cannot feel that we have rendered merited justice without some examination of the various conflicting systems and puzzling sophisms which have been so ingeniously invented, and so liberally and tenaciously urged. We shall, however, in as clear a method as we can, endeavor to exhibit and defend what we conceive to be the true philosophical and scriptural view of man's moral agency.

The numerous and formidable disputants on this subject may all be ranged in two grand divisions—the advocates of *free agency*, in the proper sense of the term, on one hand, and the defenders of the doctrine of *necessity* on the other. That we may conduct the investigation in a clear and profitable manner, great care will be requisite, in the outset,

that the terms may be clearly defined, and the real points of difference correctly understood.

I. First, then, we inquire, *What is implied in the free moral agency of man?*

An *agent* means an *actor*. A *moral* agent means an actor *whose actions relate to a rule of right and wrong*. A *free* moral agent means an actor whose actions relate to a rule of right and wrong, and *who is possessed of liberty, or freedom, in the performance of his actions.*

1. As regards the simple question of man's *agency*, we presume there will be no controversy. It is not contended that man is an agent in the sense of absolute independency. In this sense, there is but one agent in the universe, and that is God. He only possesses the power of action, either physical or moral, in an underived and independent sense. Man, and all other created beings, derived this power from the great Creator, and are dependent on him for its continuance. Yet, in the exercise of derived power, they are capable of acting. In this respect, they are contradistinguished from senseless, inanimate matter, which can only move when acted upon by external force. The distinction here presented is so clear and evident, that such as are either destitute of the capacity to perceive it, or of the fairness to acknowledge it, may at once be dismissed from the present investigation.

2. That man is a *moral* agent, we think will also be admitted by all who believe in the truth of revelation. The actions of man relate to a rule of right and wrong. He is capable of virtue or vice, and susceptible of blame or praise. This, we suppose, all the advocates of necessity, who believe in the Scriptures, readily admit.

3. The next point in the general definition which we have presented, relates to the *freedom*, or *liberty*, which man possesses in the performance of moral action. Here we find the main point of difference between the defenders of free agency and the advocates of necessity. The former contend that, in the exercise of his moral agency, man is not under the absolute necessity of acting as he does, but that he might act differently; while the latter contend that all the acts of man are necessary, in such sense that he cannot act differently from what he does.

It is true, there is a great difference in the manner in which the advocates of necessity choose to express themselves. Some of them, in words, acknowledge the free moral agency of man, and contend that he possesses freedom in the proper sense of the word. This is the ground assumed by President Edwards, of New Jersey, and his numerous adherents. But by this liberty or freedom they understand that man

merely has the power of acting according to his will, or, in other words, that he has the liberty "to do as he pleases." This, they say, is freedom in the highest sense, and the only sense in which man can enjoy it.

The definition of liberty, as given by Locke, in his famous "Essays on the Human Understanding," is this: "Liberty is a power to act or not to act, according as the mind directs." Edwards defines it to be, "the power, opportunity, or advantage, that one has to do as he pleases." It will readily be perceived that the meaning of liberty, as given by Locke and Edwards, is the same. On this subject, Edwards borrowed from Locke what the latter had borrowed from Hobbes.

It is upon the above definition, with which Edwards sets out, that his entire system is based; and here, we would say, is the commencement of his grand mistake. He has unfortunately fallen into the common error of the fatalists of every school—that of confounding the *liberty of the mind* with the *motion of the body*. Indeed, the above is neither a correct definition of *mental* nor *bodily* freedom. It is rather a definition of bodily independence. The power "to act as the mind directs," or "to do as we please," can relate only to bodily action. It presupposes a mental act—a determination of the will—but has nothing to do with the power producing that act or determination. Were we for a moment to suppose the definition of liberty above given to relate to mental action connected with the *will*, we could not vindicate the profound and learned Locke and Edwards from the charge of having gravely presented as an important definition nothing but an insignificant truism. For, surely, to say that we may will "as the mind directs," or "as we please," is the same as to say *we may will as we will.*

But that the aforesaid definition, even in the mind of Edwards, had nothing to do with our will, the following quotation will evince: "What is vulgarly called liberty," says Edwards, "namely, that power and opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his choice, is all that is meant by it; without taking into the meaning of the word any thing of the cause of that choice, or at all considering how the person came to have such a volition. In whatever manner a person may come by his choice, yet, if he is able, and there is nothing in the way to hinder his pursuing and executing his will, the man is perfectly free, according to the primary and common notion of freedom." From this we may see that the notion of liberty contended for by Edwards relates to bodily motion, and not to mental action, and is perfectly consistent with the most absolute fatalism.

Again: the definition of liberty, as given by Edwards, as it does not properly apply to *mental action*, so neither does it properly apply to the *power of bodily action* as possessed by man. If liberty, or freedom, means "the power to do as we please," then none but Omnipotence can be free, for who else "can do as they please?" How Edwards could contend for the freedom of man, in his sense of freedom, is difficult to conceive; for surely a little reflection will show that, according to that definition, no man can be free. The subject may be illustrated thus: Suppose I see an individual exposed to imminent danger from the approach of an enemy, or from the burning of a house over his head. The feelings of humanity instantly lead me to will or desire to save him. I exert my utmost strength, but all in vain. Here I have not the power "to do as I please." Hence, according to Edwards, in the above case, I cannot possibly be free. I know it may be said that my immediate will is not to save the man, but only to exert myself in that way. To this I reply, that such is evidently not the case. My prime and governing will is to save him. This precedes, and is the cause of, my willing to put forth the exertions. Indeed, if I did not first will to save the man, I never could will to put forth exertions to that effect. The instance already adduced may satisfy any one that no man has the power "to do as he pleases;" and that consequently, according to Edwards, no man possesses liberty. In this respect, we humbly conceive his definition of freedom implies too much. Freedom does not imply an ability "to do as we please."

But the definition of Edwards is defective in another sense. A man may have the power, in certain cases, "to do as he pleases," and yet not be *free*. I will illustrate this by a quotation from Mr. Locke: "Liberty cannot be where there is no thought, no volition, no will, etc. So a man striking himself or his friend by a convulsive motion of his arm which it is not in his power by volition, or the direction of his mind, to stop or forbear; nobody thinks he has liberty in this; every one pities him as acting by necessity and constraint. Again, there may be thought, there may be will, there may be volition, where there is no liberty. Suppose a man be carried, while fast asleep, into a room where is a person he longs to see, and there be locked fast in beyond his power to get out; he awakes, and is glad to see himself in so desirable company, in which he stays so willingly—that is, he prefers his staying to going away. Is not this stay voluntary? I think nobody will doubt it; and yet, being locked fast in, he is not at liberty to stay, he has not freedom to be gone." The example here given by Locke clearly shows that a man may "do as he pleases" while he is fast bound in fetters,

and can act in no other way. Consequently, in that case, he cannot enjoy liberty, unless we confound all language, and say that liberty is synonymous with bondage or necessity.

We shall now present a view of *freedom* taken by Arminian philosophers and divines, which we conceive to be far more consistent with reason and common sense.

1. By a free agent is understood one capable of acting without being necessitated, or efficiently caused to do so, by something else; and he who has this power is properly possessed of liberty.

2. God is a *free agent.* It is admitted that God only existed from eternity. Now, as creation was produced by the act of God, when as yet nothing existed but him, it necessarily follows that he acted uncaused by any thing extrinsic to himself; hence he is a free agent in the sense just given.

3. To say that any thing is uncaused, in the proper sense of the word, except God, who only is eternal, is unphilosophical and absurd.

4. Volition in man not being eternal, must be the effect of some cause—that is, it must result from some power capable of producing it. To say that it is uncaused, or that it is the cause of itself, is absurd.

5. That an agent may act without being efficiently caused to do so by something extrinsic to itself, cannot be denied without denying to God the original power of producing creation.

6. The position, that every act of volition must necessarily be either the effect of an external efficient cause, or the effect of a previous act of volition, cannot be sustained without denying that God could originally have produced creation out of nothing. Before he could have exerted creating power, he must have *willed* to do so; and as nothing then existed but himself, that will could not have been the effect of any external efficient cause, but must have been the operation of his own self-active nature. And to deny that God could have created beings endued with self-active power, (in this respect in his own image,) is to deny his omnipotence.

7. The great question on the subject of free agency is, whether man is capable of self-action or not—not whether he can act independent of God or not, but whether, in the exercise of the power with which God has endued him, he is capable of acting without being necessitated, or efficiently caused to do so, by any thing extrinsic to himself.

8. If man be endued with self-active power, then he is a free agent, and properly the author of his own acts; but if he is not thus endued, he is only a passive machine—as really such as any material substance can be —no more the author of his actions than a stock or a stone.

In entering upon the discussion of the question of free agency, it is important, in the first place, not only to ascertain clearly the precise matter of dispute, but also to understand the peculiar sense in which any ambiguous terms which custom may have employed in the controversy are used. In addition to the definitions and general principles already presented, we think it necessary to premise a few things relative to certain terms in general use by writers on this subject. First, we remark, in reference to the term *free will*, that it is not philosophically accurate. Strictly speaking, the *will* is not an agent, but only an attribute or property of an agent; and, of course, freedom, which is also the property of an agent, cannot be properly predicated of the will. Attributes belong to agents or substances, and not to qualities. Nevertheless, the sense in which the term *free will* is understood, in this connection, is so clear, that we think it would rather savor of affectation to attempt to lay it aside. The *mind*, or *soul*, of man is the active, intelligent agent to whom pertain the powers or qualities of freedom and volition; and the *will* is only the mind acting in a specific way, or it is the power of the mind to act, or not to act, in a specific way.

On this point the writers generally, on both sides in the controversy, have been agreed. President Day says: "It is the man that perceives, and loves, and hates, and acts; not his understanding, or his heart, or his will, distinct from himself."

Professor Upham defines the will to be "the mental power or susceptibility by which we put forth volitions." He also says: "The term *will* is not meant to express any thing separate from the mind; but merely embodies and expresses the fact of the mind's operating in a particular way." Stewart defines the will to be "that power of the mind of which volition is the act."

We farther remark, that although volition is, in one sense, an effect, yet it is not the passive result of an extrinsic force acting so as to produce it. It is the action of the mind, uncaused by any thing external acting efficiently on the mind. It depends simply on the exercise of those powers with which man has been endued, and which have been placed under his control by the Creator.

The great question in this controversy is not whether a man *can* will "as he pleases," for that is the same as to ask whether he *can will* as he *does will*. But the question is, *Can a man will, without being constrained to will as he does, by something extrinsic to himself acting efficiently upon him?* This is the real question on which depends the freedom of the mind in willing.

Again: when we speak of a self-active power of man in willing, we

are not to understand that this is a *lawless* exercise of power. The mind is the efficient agent that wills, but this act is performed according to the laws properly belonging to a self-moving, accountable agent. Motives and external circumstances, although they can exercise no active or efficient agency in reference to the will, yet, speaking figuratively, they are properly said to exercise an influence over the mind—that is, they are the conditions or occasions of the mind's action in willing. In this sense, they may be said to influence the will; but this is so far from being an absolute and irresistibly controlling influence, that it is really no *proper* or *efficient* influence at all.

The advocates of necessity, in their arguments upon this subject, have generally either not understood, or they have willfully misstated, the ground assumed by their opponents. They have generally reasoned upon the assumption that there is no medium between absolute necessity and perfect independency. Whereas the true doctrine in reference to the freedom of the will, and that assumed by the proper defenders of free agency, is equally aloof from both these extremes. By moral liberty, we neither understand, on the one hand, that the actions of man are so determined by things external to him, as to be bound fast with the cords of necessity; nor, on the other hand, so disconnected with surrounding circumstances, and every thing external, as to be entirely uninfluenced thereby.

The controversy, therefore, between the advocates of necessity and Arminians, or the defenders of free agency, is not whether man is influenced in his will, to any extent, by circumstances, motives, etc., or not; but whether his will is thus *absolutely and necessarily controlled, so that it could not possibly be otherwise.* If the will of man be absolutely and unconditionally fixed by motives and external causes, so that it is obliged to be as it is, then is the doctrine of necessity, as contended for by Edwards and others, true; but if the will might, in any case, be different from what it is, or if it is to any extent dependent on the self-controlling power with which man is endued, then is the free moral agency of man established, and the whole system of philosophical necessity falls to the ground.

II. We proceed now to consider *some of the leading arguments by which the free moral agency of man, as briefly defined above, is established.*

1. *We rely upon our own consciousness.*

By consciousness, we mean the knowledge we have of what passes within our own minds. Thus, when we are angry, we are sensible of the existence of that feeling within us. When we are joyful or sad, we know it When we love or hate, remember or fear, we are imme-

diately sensible of the fact. The knowledge we possess of this nature is not the result of reasoning; it is not derived from an investigation of testimony, but rises spontaneously in the mind. On subjects of this kind, arguments are superfluous; for, in reference to things of which we are conscious, no reasoning, or external testimony, can have any influence, either to strengthen our convictions, or to cause us to doubt. In vain may we endeavor by argument to persuade the man who feels conscious that his heart is elated with joy, that he is, at the same time, depressed with grief. You cannot convince the sick man, who is racked with pain, that he is in the enjoyment of perfect health; nor the man who exults in the vigor of health and vivacity, that he is writhing under the influence of a painful disease.

Knowledge derived through the medium of consciousness, like that which comes immediately through external sensation, carries upon its face its own demonstration; and so strongly does it impress the soul, that we are compelled to yield ourselves up to the insanity of universal skepticism before we can doubt it for a moment. Here, then, we base our first argument for the proper freedom of the will of man, or, more properly speaking, for the freedom of man in the exercise of the will. Who can convince me that I have not the power either to write or to refrain from writing, either to sit still or to rise up and walk? And this conviction, in reference to a self-determining power of the mind, or a control of the will belonging to ourselves, is universal. Philosophy, falsely so called, may puzzle the intellect, or confuse the understanding, but still the conviction comes upon every man with resistless force, that he has within himself the power of choice. He *feels* that he exercises this power.

We know the advocates of necessity admit that men generally, at first view of the subject, suppose that they are not necessitated in their volitions, but they assert that this is an illusion which the superior light of philosophy will dissipate. An acute metaphysician has advanced the idea, "that when men only skim the surface of philosophy, they discard common sense; but when they go profoundly into philosophic research, they return again to their earliest dictates of common sense." In the same way, a mere peep into philosophy has caused many, especially such as are predisposed to skepticism, to assert the doctrine of fatality; but a thorough knowledge of true philosophy generally serves to establish our first convictions that we are free in our volitions. Can that philosophy be sound, or that reasoning correct, which would set aside the strongest testimony of our own senses? which would persuade us that it is midnight when we behold the full

blaze of the meridian sun? No more can we accredit that mode of reasoning which would uproot the testimony of our own consciousness.

That, in my volitions, I am free to choose good or evil, and not impelled by a necessity as absolute as the laws of gravitation, is a position which I can no more doubt from my own consciousness than I can doubt my own existence. This is evident from the fact that all men have a sense of blame when they do wrong, and of approbation when they do right. Am I charged with the commission of a crime?—convince me that the force of circumstances rendered its avoidance absolutely impossible, and I can no more blame myself in the premises than I can censure the tree that fell upon the traveler as he was journeying on the highway. Remorse for the past depends upon a consciousness of our freedom for its very existence. This conviction of freedom is so indelible and universal on the minds of men, that no human effort can erase it. It may be smothered or obscured for a season in the minds of sophisticated reasoners, but in the hours of sober honesty it will regain its position, and reässert its dominion, even over the minds of such men as Voltaire, Hume, and Edwards, who have discarded it in their philosophy.

2. *Our next argument for the self-determining power of the mind over the will is founded upon the history of the world in general.*

Turn your attention to any portion or to any period of the world's history, and you find among all nations, in their very language and common modes of speech, terms and phrases expressive of the power which all men possess of determining, or being the authors of their own wills. You will find men speaking of the acts of their minds and the determinations of their wills as though they were free. And you will also find terms expressive of blame and of praise, clearly recognizing the principle that when a man does wrong he is blamed, because he *might* and *should* have avoided the wrong. In all countries it is a fact that, in public estimation, a man's guilt is extenuated in proportion as the impediments in the way of avoiding the crime are increased; and upon the same principle, when the difficulties in the way of avoiding the act are absolutely insurmountable, no one is then blamed for doing the unavoidable act.

Again: the laws of all civilized nations punish the criminal upon the supposition that he might have avoided the crime. And if it could be made appear that, in the act in question, the man was not a self-willing agent, but was only a tool used by the force of others which he had not the power to resist, in this case, there is not a government upon earth that would not as readily punish the sword of the assas-

sin as that man who was merely a passive instrument, having no power to resist.

Why, we might ask, are rewards and punishments connected with the statutory provisions of all countries, and held out before the community, if it be not to encourage to virtue and to deter from vice? And why should these sanctions be exhibited to the subjects of all civilized governments, if men have no power to influence their own wills? Will you exhibit motives and inducements to excite them to endeavor to control their wills, when they really possess no such power? I know it may be said that these motives are designed to fix, by a necessary and invincible influence, the will itself, independent of any active agency in the man. Nothing can be more absurd and contrary to fact than such a supposition. If motives are to fix the character of the will necessarily, why is the man called upon to attend to the motives, to weigh them carefully, and make a correct decision in reference to their real weight?

A farther consideration of the doctrine of motives will be assigned to another chapter. Under the present head we only add that all men, in all ages and in all places, have treated each other as though they believed they were free agents. If we discard this doctrine, and assert the principles of necessity, we must change universal customs which have stood from time immemorial, and rend the very foundations of society. If man be not a free agent, why is he held bound for the fulfillment of his promise, and censured in the failure thereof? Why is he held up as an object of scorn and detestation for any crime under heaven?

Why, we might ask, are jails and penitentiaries, and various modes of punishment, more or less severe, everywhere prevalent in civilized lands? If the advocates of necessity really believe in the truth of their system, let them be consistent, and go throughout the civilized world and plead for the destruction of all terms of language expressive of blame or praise; let them decry the unjustifiable prejudice of nations, by which benevolence and virtue have been applauded, and selfishness and vice contemned. Let them proclaim it abroad, that the robber and the murderer are as innocent as the infant or the saint, since all men only act as they are necessarily acted upon; and let them teach all nations to abolish at once and forever every description of punishment for crime or misdemeanor. Such would be the consistent course for sincere necessitarians.

3. Our third evidence of man's proper free agency is founded upon *the divine administration toward him, as exhibited in the Holy Scriptures.*

Here we shall perceive that revelation beautifully harmonizes with nature; and those clear and decisive evidences of our free agency, which, as we have seen, are derived from experience and observation, are abundantly confirmed by the book of God.

(1) We see this, first, in contemplation of *the condition in which man was placed immediately after his creation.* A moral law was given him to keep, and a severe penalty annexed to its transgression. Upon the supposition that man was not made a free agent, God must have known it; and if so, under these circumstances to have given him a moral law for the government of his actions, would have been inconsistent with the divine wisdom; for a moral law, commanding what is right and prohibiting what is wrong, can only be adapted to beings capable of doing both right and wrong.

Suppose, when the Almighty created man capable of walking erect upon the earth, but incapable of flying in the air like the fowls of heaven, he had given him a law forbidding him to walk, and commanding him to fly, every intelligent being would at once perceive the folly of such a statute. And wherefore? Simply because man has no power to fly, and therefore to command him to do so must be perfectly useless. But suppose, in addition to the command requiring an impossibility, the severest penalty had been annexed to its violation, the administration would not only be charged with folly, but it would be stamped with cruelty of the deepest dye. Suppose again, that, circumstanced as man was in his creation, the law of God had commanded him to breathe the surrounding atmosphere, and to permit the blood to circulate in his veins, and a glorious promise of reward had been annexed to obedience. In this case, also, the law would universally be pronounced an evidence of folly in the Lawgiver; and why so? Because obedience flows naturally from the constitution of man. He can no more avoid it than a leaden ball let loose from the hand can avoid the influence of gravitation. In the former supposition, obedience was impossible, for man can no more fly than he can create a world; in the latter, disobedience is impossible, for man can no more prevent the circulation of his blood than he can stop the sun in his course. But in both cases the administration is marked with folly. Thus it is seen that a moral law can only be given to a being capable of both right and wrong. Hence, as God gave man a moral law for the government of his actions, he must have been a free moral agent, capable alike of obedience and of disobedience.

We think it impossible for the unbiased mind to read the history of the creation and fall of man, and not feel that in that case God treated him as a free moral agent. Upon the supposition that the will, and all

the actions of man, are necessarily determined by the operation of causes over which he has no control, (according to the principles of necessity,) the administration of God, in the history of the fall of man, is represented as more silly and cruel than ever disgraced the reign of the meanest earthly tyrant! Against the administration of the righteous Governor of the universe, shall such foul charges be brought? Forbid it, reason! Forbid it, truth! Forbid it, Scripture!

Can a rational man believe that God would so constitute Adam in paradise as to make his eating of the forbidden fruit result as necessarily from his unavoidable condition as any effect from its cause, and then, with a pretense of justice, and a claim to goodness, say, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die"? Surely, most surely, not. The whole history of the Fall, in the light of reason, of common sense, and in view of all that we know of the divine character and government, proclaims, in language clear and forcible, the doctrine of man's free moral agency.

Milton has most beautifully commented upon this subject, supposing God to speak in reference to man:

> "I made him just and right;
> Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
> Such I created all the ethereal powers—
> Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
> Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
> Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,
> Where only what they needs must do appeared,
> Not what they would? What praise could they receive?
> What pleasure I, from such obedience paid,
> When will and reason, (reason also is choice,)
> Useless and vain, of freedom both despoiled,
> Made passive both, had served necessity,
> Not me? They therefore, as to right belonged,
> So were created———
> So, without least impulse or shadow of fate,
> Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
> They trespass; authors to themselves in all
> Both what they judge, and what they choose; for so
> I formed them *free;* and *free* they must remain,
> Till they enthrall themselves. I else must change
> Their nature, and reverse the high decree,
> Unchangeable, eternal, which ordained
> Their freedom; *they themselves ordained their fall.*"

(2) In the next place, *the Scriptures everywhere address man as a being capable of choosing;* as possessing a control over his own voli-

tions, and as being held responsible for the proper exercise of that control.

In Deut. xxx. 19, we read: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore *choose* life, that both thou and thy seed may live." And in Joshua xxiv. 15: "*Choose* you this day whom ye will serve." Now, to *choose* is to *determine* or *fix the will;* but men are here called upon to choose for themselves, which, upon the supposition that their will is, in all cases, fixed necessarily by antecedent causes beyond their control, is nothing better than solemn mockery.

Our Saviour, in Matt. xxiii. 37, complains of the Jews: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye *would not!*" Again, in John v. 40, our Lord says: "Ye *will not* come to me, that ye might have life."

These, and numerous other passages of a similar import, refer expressly to the will of men as being under their own control. And to put the matter beyond dispute, men are here not only held responsible for the character of their *will*, but they are actually represented as justly punishable on that account. In the instance of Christ lamenting over Jerusalem, and complaining, "How often would I have gathered," etc., "and ye would not," the punishment is announced in the words which immediately follow: "Behold your house is left unto you desolate." Now, the question is, can the Saviour of the world, in terms of the deepest solemnity, upbraid men for the obstinacy of their wills, and denounce against them the severest punishment for the same, if the whole matter is determined by necessity, and no more under their control than the revolutions of the planets? According to the notion of President Edwards and others, the *will* is as necessarily fixed by antecedent causes as any effect whatever is by its appropriate cause. If so, the agency of man can have no influence in determining his *will*, and consequently he cannot in justice be held accountable and punishable for the same. But as we have shown the Scriptures hold man accountable and punishable for his will, consequently it cannot be determined by necessity, but must be, in the true sense, dependent on man's own proper agency.

(3) In the last place, we argue the proper freedom of the human will from *the doctrine of a general judgment, and future rewards and punishments, as set forth in the Scriptures.*

Here we need not enlarge. That all men are responsible to God for all the determinations of their will, and that in a future day they will

be judged, and rewarded or punished accordingly, are matters expressly taught in the Scriptures. Now, according to the necessitarian scheme, how, we ask, can these things be reconciled with the divine attributes? As well might we suppose that an all-wise and merciful Being would arraign before his bar, and punish, or reward, the water for running downward, or the sparks for flying upward. As well might he punish the foot because it is not the hand, or the hand because it is not the eye. As well might he reward or punish the fish for swimming in the sea, or the birds for flying in the air! If such a procedure would universally be pronounced absurd in the extreme, we ask, upon the supposition that the will of man is determined by antecedent or external causes, as necessarily as the laws of nature, where is the difference? Every argument that would show absurdity in the one case, would, in all fairness, show the same in the other.

(4) In conclusion, upon this part of the subject, we think it proper briefly to notice *the absurdity of attempting to reconcile the doctrines of necessity with the proper freedom and accountability of man.*

This, President Edwards and many others have labored hard to accomplish. They have contended that, although the will is irresistibly fixed by necessity, yet man is properly a free and accountable moral agent, merely because he has a will, acts voluntarily, and is not, by natural force, constrained to go contrary to his will. The names by which things are called cannot, in the least, alter their nature. Hence, to load man with the ennobling epithets of moral agency, freedom, liberty, accountability, etc., while we bind him fast with the cords of necessity, can never tend in the least to slacken those cords, or to mend his condition.

To say that a man enjoys freedom merely because he has liberty to obey his will, when that will is fixed by necessity, is as absurd as to contend that a man enjoys freedom in a civil sense merely because he is at liberty to obey the laws under which he is placed, when those laws are enacted by a cruel tyrant over whom he has no control, and are only a collection of bloody edicts. Would any man contend that because he had the privilege of acting according to such a system of laws, thus arbitrarily imposed upon him, he was therefore in the enjoyment of freedom in the most rational sense? Far from it. And why? Simply because the oppressed subject would require an agency in making those laws. So long as this is denied him, and he feels upon his neck the galling yoke of tyranny, in vain might you endeavor to solace him by enlarging upon his exalted privilege of obeying the law. You might assure him that no natural force could constrain him to go contrary to

the law, and that consequently he is possessed of freedom in the proper sense, but all would be in vain. He would only feel that you were mocking at his chains!

We now appeal to the candid mind to determine if this is not precisely the kind of moral freedom which President Edwards allows to man, on account of which he strongly pleads that he is properly a free agent and justly accountable. Most unquestionably it is. He contends that man is a free moral agent because he may do as he wills, when his will is as unalterably fixed by necessity as the pillars of heaven. Such liberty as the above can no more render its possessor a free, accountable moral agent, than that possessed by a block or a stone.

Indeed, there is no difference between the liberty attributed to man by the learned President of Princeton College, and that possessed by a block of marble as it falls to the earth when let loose from the top of a tower. We may call the man *free* because he may act according to his will or inclination, while that will is determined by necessity; but has not the marble precisely the same freedom? It has perfect liberty to fall; it is not constrained by natural force to move in any other direction. If it falls necessarily, even so, on the principle of Edwards, man acts necessarily. If it be said that the marble cannot avoid falling as it does, even so man cannot avoid acting according to his will, just as he does. If it be said that he has no disposition, and makes no effort, to act contrary to his will, even so the marble has no inclination to fall in any other direction than it does. The marble moves *freely*, because it has no inclination to move otherwise; but it moves *necessarily*, because irresistibly impelled by the law of gravitation. Just so man acts *freely*, because he acts according to his will; but he acts *necessarily*, because he can no more change his will than he can make a world.

And thus it is plain that, although necessitarians may say they believe in free agency and man's accountability, it is a freedom just such as pertains to lifeless matter. If, according to Edwards, man is free, and justly accountable for his actions merely because he acts according to his own will, *when he has no control over that will*, upon the same principle the maniac would be a free, accountable agent. If, in a paroxysm of madness, he murders his father, he acts according to his will. It is a voluntary act, and necessitarians cannot excuse him because his will was not under his own control; for, in the view of their system, it was as much so as the will of any man in any case possibly can be. The truth is, it is an abuse of language to call that free-

dom which binds fast in the chains of necessity. Acting voluntarily amounts to no liberty at all, if I cannot possibly act otherwise than I do.

The question is, not whether I have a will, nor whether I may act according to my will, but *What determines the will?* This is the point to be settled in the question of free agency. It is admited that the will controls the actions; but who controls the will? As the will controls the actions, it necessarily follows that whoever controls the will must be accountable for the actions. Whoever controls the will must be the proper author of all that necessarily results from it, and consequently should be held accountable for the same. But man, say necessitarians, has no control whatever over his will. It is fixed by necessity just as it is, so that it could no more be otherwise than the effect could cease to result from the cause.

According to this, we may talk as we may about free agency, the liberty of the will, accountability, etc., but man, after all the embellishment we can impart, is a free, accountable agent, just in the same sense as the most insignificant particle of lifeless matter. Here we will close the present chapter by calling to mind what we have endeavored to exhibit.

1. We have endeavored to explain *what is implied in the proper free moral agency of man.*

2. We have endeavored to establish that doctrine by the *evidence of consciousness; by an observation of the history of the world;* and *by an appeal to the divine administration as set forth in the Scriptures.* Let the reader decide.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XIV.

QUESTION 1. Has the free agency of man been a subject of dispute?

2. In what two general classes are the disputants placed?

3. What is meant by an *agent*?

4. By a *moral* agent?

5. By a *free* moral agent?

6. What is the definition of liberty as given by Edwards?

7. What is the Arminian definition?

8. What is the precise point of controversy between necessitarians and the advocates for free agency, in reference to the will?

9. What are the three leading arguments for free agency?

10. Explain the argument from consciousness.

11 What is the argument from the world's history?

12 What is the argument from the divine administration as revealed in the Scriptures?

13. How is the proof conducted in reference to Adam in paradise?

14. How, in the addresses to man as a being capable of choosing?

15. How, in reference to the general judgment and rewards and punishments?

16. Has the attempt been made to reconcile necessity and free agency?

17. By what means?

18. How is this attempt shown to be vain?

19. How does it appear that, according to the doctrine of necessity, man cannot be accountable?

20. What kind of free agency is consistent with the doctrine of necessity?

21 What has been attempted in this chapter?

CHAPTER XV.

THE MORAL AGENCY OF MAN—OBJECTIONS.

We propose in this chapter to examine some of the principal *objections* which have been urged against the view taken in the preceding chapter of the freedom of the will. Those most worthy of notice are the following, viz.:

I. It is said to be *absurd in itself.*

II. It is said to be *irreconcilable with the Scripture account of the divine prescience.*

III. It is said to *conflict with the doctrine of motives.*

We propose a respectful attention to each of these grand *objections.*

I. It is alleged that *the view we have taken of the proper freedom of the will is absurd in itself.*

President Edwards has argued at great length, that the self-active power of the mind in the determination of the will, as contended for by Arminians, is *absurd in itself,* because it implies *a preceding determination of the will to fix each free volition,* and that this would imply an infinite series of volitions, which is absurd.

President Day, of Yale College, who seems to be an apt disciple of Edwards, has, in a late work on the Will, highly complimented the treatise of Edwards, as having furnished in this argument an unanswerable refutation of the Arminian notion of freedom. And truly we must say that the position, "that if each active volition is necessarily preceded by another, this would imply an infinite series, and consequently be absurd," is a matter so obvious, that the numerous pages devoted by the learned author to this subject might have been spared. Indeed, he seems to have labored and proved, to an extent almost beyond endurance, a position which no intelligent mind can dispute. Had he shown the same solicitude for the establishment of his premises, and been equally successful in that particular, there could be no objection to his *conclusion.*

That the Arminian notion of the self-active power of the mind in determining the will, implies that each volition must be preceded by another volition, is what has been asserted, but has never yet been

proved. The advocates of necessity, although they admit that by the self-determining power of the will is meant "the soul in the exercise of a power of willing," yet, when they engage in argument, appear to forget this admission, and proceed as though the will were supposed to be an agent separate and distinct from the mind or soul in the act of willing. Hence they involve the discussion in confusion, and bewilder the mind in a maze of verbal contradiction and absurdity. In every act of the will, let it be distinctly understood that the mind or soul is the agent, and the will is only expressive of the act or state of the mind or soul at the time and under the condition, of willing.

Now let us inquire if every act of the soul in *willing* must, according to the Arminian notion of freedom, be preceded by another act of the soul in willing. Why is it that there can be no choice or act of willing performed by the mind itself, unless it is preceded by another act that determines it? Surely a choice preceded by another choice which determines it, is no choice at all; and to say that every free act, or self-determined act, must be preceded by another, by which it is determined, is the same as to say that there can be no free, or self-determined act. And this is the very point in dispute that ought to be proved, and not taken for granted. Indeed, we may directly deny it, and make our appeal to common sense to sustain us in the position.

For illustration, we refer to the first vicious choice ever made by man. Now, let us contemplate the history of this matter as it really transpired. The tempter came to man for the first time, and presented the seducing bait. Man willed to disobey. Here we see but one act of the mind. There is not an act determining to choose the evil, and then another consequent act choosing the evil. The act determining to choose is really choosing. Determining to choose in a certain way, and choosing in that way, are the same thing. Now to say that Adam could not, in the exercise of his own powers, independent of a predetermining cause operating upon him, choose between the evil and the good, is the same as to say that God could not make a free agent.

Indeed, to say that a choice free from the necessary determination of a preëxisting cause cannot exist, is the same as to say that there is not a free agent in the universe, and that the Deity himself cannot possess self-determining power, but is only acted upon by the impulse of fatality. If the Deity cannot choose or will without something external to himself determining his will, where are his self-existence and independence? For, if the divine will is always determined by something external to he divine mind that wills, then there must be something

existing prior to all the divine volitions, separate and distinct from the Deity himself.

Again: if it be admitted that the divine mind can will or choose freely without being acted upon by a preceding choice, then it follows that it is not absurd in itself for the mind to determine its own acts, independent of necessary preceding causes. If it be admitted that the Deity can will by the free exercise of his own powers, then the only question will be, Can he confer this exalted power upon a creature? If we deny that he possesses it himself, we destroy his self-existence and independence. If we deny his ability to confer this power upon a creature, we deny his omnipotence.

Then the whole question concerning the absurdity of the Arminian doctrine of the self-determining power of the will, resolves itself into a question concerning the divine power. Necessitarians contend that God cannot create a free, self-determining agent; and Arminians deny the assertion, and appeal to the self-existence and independence of the Deity to disprove the absurdity in the case; and rely upon the omnipotence of God to prove that the creation of moral agents in the divine image, so far as the self-determining power of the mind is concerned, is not impossible. To say that God cannot make a free agent capable of determining within himself his own volitions, is to limit the divine power.

But Edwards again contends that "this self-determining power of the will implies the absurdity of an effect without a cause." We deny the charge. We are not obliged to admit that because the will is not determined in every case by a preceding act of the will, or some previous cause external to the mind itself, that therefore there is no cause in the case. By no means. If the mind wills one way instead of another, there must be a *cause* for it; but that cause must not necessarily be either *preceding* or *external*, as necessitarians contend. It may be both *simultaneous* and *internal*—that is, it may originate in the mind itself at the time of willing.

If it be said that "then the mind itself must be the cause of its own volitions, and if so, there must always be a previous something in the mind to determine it to will in one way instead of another," we reply, truly the mind is the cause of its own volitions, to such extent that they are not necessarily determined independently of its own action; but it does not follow that there must be something previously existing in the mind, necessarily determining it to choose *as it does*. All the previously existing cause essential in the case is, the *capacity* of the mind, in the exercise of its powers, to will at the time, *either the one*

way or the other. If the causative power exists in the agent or mind to effectuate either one of two or more events or volitions, it matters not which one of these events or volitions may be produced, *it* will be as truly the resultant of an *adequate cause* as if the agent or mind had possessed no alternative power for producing another event or volition, instead of the one it did produce. Hence it is unphilosophical to say that a volition is *uncaused*, because the agent *causing it* had power to have caused another volition instead thereof. Our own consciousness testifies that we have the alternative power of *willing* or *doing right* or *wrong;* and our willing or doing either way does not prove that we might not have willed or done otherwise. In the exercise of this capacity, upon the principles of free agency, and not impelled by stern necessity, the particular will in a given case originates; and thus we see how it was in the case given of the first transgression.

Man had been endued with the power to choose, or to control, his own will. The tempter came: in the exercise of that power, man chose the evil. Here the cause was *in himself*, and originated in, and flowed from, the manner in which he exercised his powers. This manner of exercising his powers resulted, not necessarily, but contingently, from the nature of the powers themselves. He might have exercised them differently. The cause, or the determining power, was in himself. God placed it there; and for God to place it there to be exercised contingently for good or evil, implies no more absurdity, so far as we can see, than for God to have placed the cause in something preceding, external, and necessary. And thus we think the doctrine of free agency is successfully vindicated from the charge of absurdity and self-contradiction. So far from being absurd in itself, it presents the only consistent illustration of the divine attributes, and the only satisfactory comment upon the divine administration.

II. The next grand objection to the doctrine of free agency is, *that it is supposed to be irreconcilable with the Scripture account of the divine prescience.*

Necessitarians argue that free agency, in the proper sense, implies contingency; and that contingency cannot be reconciled with the divine foreknowledge. It is admitted by Arminians, and the advocates of free agency generally, that the foreknowledge of God extends to all things great and small, whether necessary or contingent—that it is perfect and certain. The only question is, whether this foreknowledge implies necessity. That whatever God foreknows certainly will take place, we are free to acknowledge; but that this *certain foreknowledge* implies *absolute necessity*, is what we deny, and what, we believe, cannot be

proved. All the arguments we have seen adduced for that purpose are based upon the supposition that *certainty* and *necessity* are synonymous. Now, if we can show that they are separate and distinct things, and that certainty does not imply necessity, the objection under consideration must fall to the ground.

We remark, in the first place, that this objection labors under the serious difficulty that, while it aims to destroy the free agency of man, it really would destroy the free agency of God. For, if whatever is foreknown as certain must also be necessary, and cannot possibly be otherwise, then, as God foreknew from eternity every act that *he* would perform throughout all duration, he has, all the while, instead of being a free agent, acting after the "counsel of his own will," been nothing more than a passive machine, acting as acted upon by stern necessity. This conclusion is most horribly revolting; but, according to the argument of necessitarians, it cannot possibly be avoided. And if we are forced to the conclusion that God only acts as impelled by necessity, and can in no case act differently from what he does, then it must follow that necessity or fate made and preserves all things; but is it not obvious that this doctrine of necessity, as applied to the Deity, is most glaringly absurd? To suppose that the great Jehovah, in all his acts, has been impelled by necessity, or, which is the same thing, that he has only moved as he was acted upon, is to suppose the eternal existence of some moving power separate and distinct from the Deity, and superior to him; which would be at once to deny his independence and supremacy. We cannot, then, without the most consummate arrogance and absurdity, admit the position that all the acts of the Deity are brought about by necessity. Yet they are foreknown; and if, as we have seen, God's foreknowledge of *his* own acts does not render them necessary, and destroy *his* free agency, how can it be consistently argued that God's foreknowledge of the acts of men renders them necessary, and destroys *their* free agency?

Again, let us contemplate the subject of foreknowledge in relation to the actions of men, and see what evidence we can find that it implies necessity. It has been contended that God cannot foreknow that a future event certainly will take place, unless that event necessarily depends upon something by which it is known. "The only way," says President Edwards, "by which any thing can be known, is for it to be evident; and if there be any evidence of it, it must be one of these two sorts, either self-evidence or proof: an evident thing must be either evident in itself, or evident in something else." This he lays down as his premises, from which he proceeds to argue that God cannot foreknow

future events, unless they are rendered absolutely necessary. That his premises, and the reasoning based upon them, may hold good in reference to the knowledge of man, we do not question; but that they apply to the foreknowledge of the Deity, cannot be shown.

If man foreknows any thing, that foreknowledge must result from a knowledge of something now existing, between which and the event foreknown there is a necessary connection. But is it legitimate to infer that because this is the case with man, it must also be the case with God? Have we a right to measure the Holy One by ourselves? Indeed, to infer the necessity of all things from the divine prescience, is to limit the perfections of Jehovah. It is to say either that God could not constitute any thing contingent, or that, after having so constituted it, he cannot foreknow it. Either hypothesis would argue a limitation to the perfections of God.

This subject, we think, may be rendered plain by a careful reflection on the nature of knowledge. What is it? Is it an active power, possessing a distinct independent existence? We answer, No. It is passive in its nature, and possesses only a dependent and relative existence. It can exist only in the mind of an intelligent being. Knowledge, as such, can exert no immediate and active influence on any thing whatever.

It has been said that "knowledge is power;" but it is not implied by that expression that it is a power capable of exerting itself. All that is implied is, that it directs an active agent in the manner of exerting his power. What effect, I would ask, can my knowledge of a past event have upon that event? Surely none at all. What effect can my knowledge of a future event have upon it? Considered in itself, it can have no influence at all. Is there any event, whether past, present, or future, on which the mere knowledge of man can have any influence? Certainly there is none. Knowledge is a something existing in the mind. It has its seat there, and of itself it is incapable of walking abroad to act upon extraneous objects. I would therefore ask, What effect can the divine knowledge have on a past or present event? Is it not obvious that it can have none? The knowledge of God does not affect the faithfulness of Abraham, or the treachery of Judas, in the least. Those events would still continue to have occurred precisely as they did, if we could suppose all trace of them to be erased from the divine mind. And if we could suppose that God was not now looking down upon me, could any one believe that I would write with any more or less freedom on that account? Surely not. If, then, knowledge, considered in all these different aspects, is passive in its nature, how can we rationally

infer that its passivity is converted into activity so soon as we view it in the aspect of the divine prescience?

But it will doubtless be argued that although the foreknowledge of God may not *render* future events *necessary*, yet it proves that they *are so*. To this we reply, that it proves that they are *certain*, but cannot prove that they are *necessary*. But still, it will be asked, where is the difference? If they are certain, must they not therefore be necessary?

That we may illustrate the distinction between certainty and necessity, we will refer to the crime of Judas in betraying the Saviour. Here we would say it was a matter certain in the divine mind, from all eternity, that Judas would commit this crime. God foreknew it. Although it was also foretold, yet it was not rendered any the more certain by that circumstance; for prediction is only knowledge recorded or made manifest; but knowledge is equally certain, whether secret or revealed. The pointed question now is, *Could Judas possibly have avoided that crime?* Was he still a free agent? and might he have acted differently? or was he impelled by absolute necessity? We answer, he could have avoided the crime. He was still a free agent, and might have acted differently.

Here it will no doubt be argued that if he had avoided the crime, the foreknowledge of God would have been defeated, and the Scriptures broken. To fairly solve this difficulty, and draw the line between *certainty* and *necessity*, we answer, that if Judas, in the exercise of the power of free agency with which he was endued, had proved faithful, and avoided the crime in question, neither would the foreknowledge of God have been frustrated, nor the Scriptures broken. In that case, the foreknowledge of God would have been different, accordingly as the subject varied upon which it was exercised. God could not then have foreknown his treachery; and had it not been foreknown, it never could have been predicted. A free agent may falsify a proposition supposed to announce foreknowledge, but cannot falsify foreknowledge; for if the agent should falsify the proposition, that proposition never could have been the announcement of foreknowledge.

The truth is, the prediction depends on the foreknowledge, and the foreknowledge on the event itself. The error of the necessitarians on this subject is, they put the effect for the cause, and the cause for the effect. They make the foreknowledge the *cause of the event*, whereas the event is the *cause of the foreknowledge*. No event ever took place merely because God foreknew it; on the contrary, the taking place of the event is the cause of his having foreknown it. Let this distinction be

kept in mind, that, in the order of nature, the event does not depend on the knowledge of it, but the knowledge on the event, and we may readily see a distinction between certainty and necessity. It is certain with God who will be saved, and who will not; yet it is likewise certain that salvation is made possible to many who, according to the certain prescience of God, never will embrace it. God has made some things necessary, and some things contingent. Necessary events he foreknew as necessary—that is, he foreknew that they could not possibly take place otherwise. Contingent events he foreknew as contingent—that is, he foreknew that they might take place otherwise. And thus, we think, foreknowledge and free agency may be harmonized, human responsibility maintained, and the divine government successfully vindicated.

III. We will now consider the objection to the view taken of free agency, *which is founded upon the doctrine of motives.*

Necessitarians have relied with great confidence on their arguments from this source. In illustrating their views of the doctrine of motives, they have chosen different figures, all amounting substantially to the same thing—leading necessarily to the same conclusion.

Dr. Hartley has represented the thoughts and feelings of the soul as resulting from the various vibrations of the brain, produced by the influence of motives, or surrounding circumstances. He admits frankly that his scheme implies "the necessity of human actions;" but he says, "I am sorry for it, but I cannot help it."

Lord Kames represents the universe as "one vast machine composed of innumerable wheels, all closely linked together, and moving as they are moved." Man he considers as "one wheel fixed in the middle of the vast automaton, moving just as necessarily as the sun, moon, or earth."

President Edwards has represented "motives and surrounding objects as reaching through the senses to a finely-wrought nervous system, and, by the impressions made there, necessarily producing thought, volition, and action, according to the fixed laws of cause and effect."

According to all these three general systems, the conclusion in reference to the influence of motives, etc., is the same—that is, it appears that the mind is like a machine or a pair of scales, only a passive substance, moving as it is acted upon by force applied to the wheel, or weight to the scale. Here is the leading principle in the systems of all the advocates of philosophical necessity; and upon this grand point the advocates of free agency join issue.

That we may see distinctly the point upon which the issue is made,

we may here observe that advocates on both sides have very frequently mistaken or misrepresented the views of their opponents. First, then, let it be understood that necessitarians, by motives as influencing the will, do not maintain that the strongest motive, considered in reference to its real and proper weight, always prevails; but by the strongest motive they understand the motive having the greatest influence over the individual at the time, and under all the circumstances of the case. This is the same as saying that the *prevailing motive always prevails;* which is only the assertion of a simple truism, which no one can dispute.

The point, therefore, in which the matter of controversy is involved, is not whether the strongest motive, considered in reference to its real weight, always prevails. This, necessitarians are misrepresented, if they are charged with holding. Nor is it in dispute whether the strongest motive, considered in reference to its influence over the individual at the time and under the circumstances, always prevails. This the advocates of free agency do not deny, for that would be the same as to deny that the prevailing motive is the prevailing motive. Nor is it a matter of dispute whether motives and surrounding circumstances have any influence in determining the will. That they do have a powerful influence, metaphorically speaking, none can deny.

What, then, we ask, is the real point of dispute? It is simply this: Do motives presented to the mind, and surrounding circumstances, have an efficient, absolute, and irresistible influence over the will, *so as in all cases to make it necessarily what it is?* This is the real and the only point in the doctrine of motives on which the controversy turns. Necessitarians affirm on this question, and the advocates of free agency deny. We will endeavor impartially to examine the question.

That we may understand the true doctrine concerning the influence of motives on the will, we observe, 1. God the Creator must have possessed within himself the power of action, otherwise creation never could have taken place; for, previous to creation, nothing existed but God, and consequently if he could only act as acted upon by something external to himself, as there was nothing in the universe but himself, he must have remained forever in a state of inaction, and creation could not have originated. Now it must be admitted, either that God has created beings capable of acting without being necessarily acted upon by something external to themselves, or he has not. If he has not, then it will follow that there is but one agent in the universe, and that is God; and angels and men are only patients, no more capable of self-motion than a clod or a stone. This theory at once destroys the

distinction between matter and mind, is directly repugnant to the whole tenor of Scripture, and most recklessly subversive of the plainest dictates of common sense! And yet it will appear that it is the only theory consistent with the views of necessitarians on the subject of motives.

Now let us take the opposite position, and suppose, according to common sense and Scripture, that two distinct classes of substances have been created—material and immaterial. In other words, that God has not only created dead, inanimate matter, capable only of moving as it is moved, but that he has also created intelligent beings, endued with self-moving energy, capable, not of themselves, but in the exercise of their derived powers, of voluntary action, independent of external and necessary force, and it will be at once apparent that there is a radical and essential distinction in nature between lifeless matter and these intelligent beings. If this distinction be admitted, which cannot possibly be denied while the voice of common sense or Scripture is allowed to be heard, then it will follow that lifeless matter and intelligent beings are regulated by laws as different as are their essential natures.

Here we find the origin of the grand metaphysical blunder of necessitarians of every school, and of every age. They have made no distinction between matter and mind. The ancient Manichees, the Stoics, the atheistic and deistic philosophers, Spinoza, Hobbes, Voltaire, Hume, and others, have been followed, in this confounding of matter and mind, by many learned and excellent men, such as President Edwards of Princeton, and President Day of Yale College.

Indeed, the whole treatise of Edwards, in which he has written three hundred pages on the human will, is based upon this blunder. His almost interminable chain of metaphysical lore, when clearly seen in all its links, is most palpably an argument in a circle. He assumes that the mind is similar to matter, in order to prove that it can only act as acted upon; and then, because it can only act as acted upon, he infers that, in this respect, the mind, like matter, is governed by necessity. Although he turns the subject over and over, and presents it in an almost endless variety of shape, it all, so far as we can see, amounts to this: The mind, in its volitions, can only act as it is acted upon; therefore the will is necessarily determined. And what is this but to say that *the will is necessarily determined, because it is necessarily determined?* Can any real distinction be pointed out between the labored argument of Edwards and this proposition? But we shall soon see that this assumed position—that the mind can only act as it is acted upon—is

philosophically false. This grand pillar upon which the huge metaphysical edifice has been reared, may be shown to be rotten throughout, yea, it may be snapped asunder by a gentle stroke from the hammer of reason and common sense; and then the edifice, left without foundation, must fall to the ground.

Let us now contemplate these motives which are said to act upon the mind so as necessarily to influence the will. Let us look them full in the face, and ask the question, What are they? Are they intelligent beings, capable of locomotion? Are they endued with a self-moving energy? Yea, more: Are they capable of not only moving themselves, but also of imparting their force to something external to themselves, so as to coerce action in that which could not act without them? If these questions be answered in the negative, then it will follow that motives, considered in themselves, can no more act on the mind so as necessarily to determine the will, than a world can be created by something without existence. If these questions be answered in the affirmative, then it will follow that motives at least are free agents—capable of acting without being acted upon, and endued with self-controlling and self-determining energy. Necessitarians may fall upon either horn of the dilemma; but upon which horn soever they fall, their system must perish.

If the attempt be made to evade this by saying that motives do not act themselves, but God is the agent acting upon man, and determining his will through the instrumentality of motives—if this be the meaning, then I demand, why not call things by their right names? Why attribute the determination of the will to the influence of motives, and at the same time declare that motives are perfectly inefficient, capable of exercising no influence whatever? Is not this fairly giving up the question, and casting "to the moles and to the bats" the revered argument for necessity, founded upon the influence of motives?

Again, to say that motives exercise no active influence, but are only passive instruments in the hands of God by which *he* determines the will by an immediate energy exerted at the time, is the same as to say that God is the only agent in the universe; that he wills and acts for man; and, by his own direct energy, performs every physical and moral act in the universe, as really and properly as he created the worlds; and then that he will condemn and punish men everlastingly for *his own proper acts!* Is this the doctrine of philosophical necessity? Truly it is. And well may we say this is *fatalism!* This is *absurdity!*

Now, let us turn from the absurdities of the necessitarian scheme, and

see if we can perceive the true doctrine on the subject of motives. Suppose, as I pass the street, I perceive in the shop on my right the choicest liquors most invitingly displayed. I am tempted to drink to excess. I parley with the temptation. I long for the delicious wines. I think of the dreadful consequences of inebriety; but then returns my love of strong drink, and I determine in my will to yield myself up to intoxication. Here we perceive an act has been performed by which the will is fixed in a particular way; but the question is, Who is the agent in this act? Necessitarians would say the motive to intoxication has been the active agent, and man has been the passive instrument. But we ask, What motive, or what surrounding circumstance, in this case, has put forth active energy, so as not only to move itself without being acted upon, but also to communicate an irresistible impulse to something external to itself? Can the wines in the bottles exhibit their eloquent tongues, and plead with the passer-by to quaff them? Surely not. They are themselves as passive as the bricks in the wall. Can the love for strong drink assert a separate and independent existence, and rise up as an active agent, independent of the man, and use arguments with the understanding, and coercively determine the will? This is so far from being the case, that these motives have no existence itself, independent of the man. They only derive their existence through the exercise of the active powers of man; and shall it be said that they necessarily control those powers, and even that those powers cannot be exerted except as they are necessarily impelled by motives? Can motives be the cause and the effect in the same sense, at the same time?

The plain truth is, motives do not act themselves at all. It is the mind that acts upon them. They are passive, and only move as they are moved. The mind of man is the active agent that picks the motive up, turns it about, and estimates its weight. This will be rendered somewhat plainer when we reflect that two objects both passive can never act upon each other: some active power must first move the one, or it can never move the other. Suppose two blocks of marble placed near together in the same room: can the one arise up and impart a direct and resistless influence to the other, so as to cause it necessarily to change its place? Certainly not. And why? Simply because they are both passive. Now, as motives, arguments, and surrounding circumstances, are obviously passive in their nature, incapable of moving themselves, it necessarily follows that if the mind is also passive, the one cannot act upon the other—neither motives upon the mind, nor the mind upon motives. Hence, agreeably to the assertion of necessitarians, that the mind is passive, the will cannot be influenced by motives at all.

The fallacy of the reasoning of Edwards and others on this subject consists in their considering the influence attributed to motives as an independent and active influence, whereas motives are all the time passive, and are really acted upon by the mind, soul, or feelings of man. So far from motives actively determining the will, through the mind or soul, it is the mind or soul that determines the will, and, by its own active energy, gives to motives all the influence they possess.

This is evident from the very nature of motives. What are they? Are they not arguments, reasons, or persuasions? Now, if the mind can exercise no free agency of its own, in attending to arguments, examining reasons, or yielding to persuasions, why address them to man, and exhort him to give them their due weight? The very fact that they are motives, arguments, reasons, or persuasions, is proof sufficient that they are designed to influence the will, not necessarily and irresistibly, but only through the agency of man. So that when we admit that the motive having the greatest influence, at the time and under the circumstances, always prevails — or, in other words, that the prevailing motive always prevails—the question is still before us, Why does it prevail? What gives it the greatest influence? Does it exercise this influence of itself independently? We have already shown that it cannot. What, then, gives it this prevailing influence? It is the free and uncoerced agency of the man himself which determines the influence of the motive, which gives it that influence, and thereby determines the will.

If it still be asked why the mind determines to give to a particular motive a certain influence, and to fix the will accordingly, we reply, the reason is in the mind itself. God has endued us with this power. Without it we could not be moral agents; we could not be accountable; we could no more be rewarded or punished than the earth on which we tread.

We think we have said enough to show that the argument against free agency from the doctrine of motives is fallacious, and alike repugnant to reason, common sense, and Scripture. And whether, in this chapter, we have successfully vindicated the doctrine of free agency from the objections that it is absurd in itself, and inconsistent with the divine prescience and with the doctrine of motives, we submit to the decision of the reader.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XV.

QUESTION 1. What are the three leading objections to the doctrine of free agency?

2. How is it attempted to prove that this doctrine is *absurd in itself*?

3. How is the objection answered?

4. What is the objection founded upon the doctrine of *foreknowledge*?

5. Is the doctrine of foreknowledge admitted as *true*?

6. Is it admitted that it implies *certainty*?

7. How, then, is the objection answered?

8. What is the objection from the doctrine of *motives*?

9. How is this objection answered?

10. What is the precise point of dispute in reference to motives?

11. What has been aimed at in this chapter?

PART I.—DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK III.—THE REMEDIAL SCHEME—ITS PROVISIONS.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ATONEMENT—ITS NECESSITY.

THE word *atonement* occurs but once in the New Testament, (Rom. v. 11.) In that passage the Greek is *καταλλαγήν*, from the verb *καταλλάσσω*, which means *to reconcile.*

It is, however, a word of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament. In the Hebrew, the word is *copher*, signifying, primarily, to *cover*, or *overspread;* but is constantly used to denote the *expiation or satisfaction* made for sin, by the various sacrifices and offerings presented under the law.

By lexicographers, generally, the word is defined to mean *an expiation or satisfaction for an injury or offense.*

In a theological sense, by the *atonement*, we understand *the expiation or satisfaction made for sin, by the sufferings and death of Christ, whereby salvation is made possible to man.*

No subject belonging to Christianity has been thought to involve more intricacy, and certainly none possesses more importance, than the one now presenting itself to our consideration; therefore it merits at our hands the closest thought and the most devout supplication, that in reference to this deeply interesting theme we may be led to a clear perception of the "truth as it is in Jesus."

It will readily be perceived that the great subject of redemption through the atonement of Christ is founded upon, and intimately connected with, the state of man as a sinner, which has been the subject of discussion in several of the preceding chapters. Indeed, it is clear that if man be not a sinner, to provide a Saviour for his redemption would be

perfectly useless. Redemption through Christ is obviously a scheme of recovery from the evils of the Fall. It is a gracious remedy for the moral disease with which, as we have already seen, the nature of man is infected. To deny the existence of the disease, is to discard the necessity of the remedy. Hence it would appear reasonable to suppose that our views of the nature of the remedy will be influenced by the light in which we view the disease for which it is provided. If we are heterodox on the one point, to preserve consistency throughout our system, we cannot be sound in the faith upon the other. Thus it will be seen that, in proportion as the scriptural doctrine of depravity has been depreciated or discarded, so has the doctrine of atonement been explained away or denied.

Before we enter properly into the investigation of this subject, as presented in the Scriptures, it may be proper briefly to present the leading views which have been entertained upon it by different classes of theologians. That Jesus Christ is the Saviour of sinners, and that his mission into our world, and his death and sufferings are, in some way, connected with this great work, is freely admitted by all. But when we come to speak of the nature of the connection between the death of Christ and the salvation of man, a great diversity of sentiment, on points of vast importance, is at once seen.

The first theory which we shall notice upon this subject is generally denominated Socinianism, though it has been adopted by most of the modern Unitarians. The substance of this system we shall present in the language of Dr. Priestley, in his "History of the Doctrine of the Atonement." The quotations have been collected and thrown together by Dr. Hill, in his "Lectures," as follows:

"The great object of the mission and death of Christ was to give the fullest proof of a state of retribution, in order to supply the strongest motives to virtue; and the making an express regard to the doctrine of a resurrection to immortal life the principal sanction of the laws of virtue, is an advantage peculiar to Christianity. By this peculiar advantage the gospel reforms the world, and remission of sin is consequent on reformation. For although there are some texts in which the pardon of sin seems to be represented as dispensed in consideration of the sufferings, the merit, the resurrection, the life, or the obedience of Christ, we cannot but conclude, upon a careful examination, that all these views of it are partial representations, and that, according to the plain general tenor of Scripture, the pardon of sin is, in reality, always dispensed by the free mercy of God upon account of man's personal virtue, a penitent, upright heart, and a reformed,

exemplary life, without regard to the sufferings or merit of any being whatever."

From these extracts it appears that the Socinians deny that Christ suffered in the room of sinners, to expiate their sins, and satisfy the demands of a broken law. According to their view, he only saves us by leading us to the practice of virtue, through the influence of his example and instructions.

The second theory we shall notice is the Arian hypothesis. This, while it attaches more importance than the Socinians do to the death of Christ, denies that it was either vicarious or expiatory; and so falls very far short of the proper Scripture view. This system represents Christ as more than a mere man—as a superangelic being, the first and most exalted of creation; and that his mission into our world was a wonderful display of benevolence, inasmuch as he left the high honors of glory, and condescended to lead a life of toil and ignominy in the propagation of his religion; and then to seal the truth of his doctrine with his own blood. Sufferings so great, say the Arians, by so exalted a character, although they are in no sense vicarious or expiatory, yet are not without their influence, but constitute a powerful argument in favor of the salvation of sinners, since they form a sufficient ground for the Redeemer to claim the deliverance of all who repent and believe, as a reward for what he has done and suffered in their behalf. Thus, according to this view, the Saviour gains a power and dignity as a Mediator by his sufferings, though there is seen no special necessity for them, inasmuch as God, had he seen fit, could have extended salvation to man as consistently without as with those sufferings.

The theory which we have here presented has not only been advocated by the Arians, but, with little variation, has found favor with some divines having higher claims to orthodoxy—such as Dr. Balguy of the Established Church of England, and Dr. Price among the Dissenters. We will not now enter into the discussion of the peculiar character of the two schemes just presented, but in the regular course of the investigation of the Scripture doctrine of the atonement, we trust their refutation will be sufficiently obvious.

In pleading for their peculiar views on the subject of the atonement, the different parties have not only appealed to the Scriptures, but have instituted a course of reasoning founded upon the analogy of faith and the general tenor of revelation. Such a course of investigation, in reference to this subject, is by no means improper, provided both reason and revelation be allowed to occupy their proper position. But let it

be remembered that while we may exercise our reason in reference to the correct understanding of what is plainly revealed, we are not at liberty, as professed Christians, to reason in opposition to the explicit declarations of the inspired oracles. That this obviously important principle has always been observed, especially by those who have opposed the expiatory character of the atonement, can by no means be affirmed. Indeed, there is perhaps no subject in the investigation of which men have ventured farther in bold and impudent assertion, in the very face of plain Scripture. Such has been the spirit of many who have written in opposition to what we conceive to be the true doctrine of the atonement, that they have been utterly incapable of making a fair statement of the doctrine they opposed. They have poured their vituperation and abuse upon a caricature of their own invention—a creature of their own imagination—bearing scarcely a feature of resemblance to the acknowledged sentiments of those whom they opposed. But this will more fully appear as we proceed in the investigation of the doctrine.

I. The first point to which we invite attention is, *the difficulties in the way of man's salvation, which rendered the atonement necessary.* Why was it, it is asked, that there was a necessity for the sufferings of the Son of God? To this we reply, that the great necessity for the atonement is founded upon the pure and unchangeable principles of the divine government. But these must be considered in connection with the true character and condition of man, as well as the grand design of the Almighty in his creation. Let these important points be carefully examined, and the necessity for the great work of atonement will be clearly seen.

1. Then, we say, that in proposing to himself the creation of human beings, the Infinite Mind must have been swayed and determined by a design worthy the character of the Supreme Creator. This grand design, or reason, for the creation of man could not have been based upon the nature or character of man while as yet he had no actual existence, but must have been the result of the divine perfections, in their independent operations. "I do not here introduce any external impulsive cause as moving God unto the creation of the world; for I have presupposed all things distinct from him to have been produced out of nothing by him, and consequently to be posterior, not only to the motion, but the actuation, of his will. Since, then, nothing can be antecedent to the creature besides God himself, neither can any thing be a cause of any of his actions but what is in him, we must not look for any thing extrinsical unto him, but wholly acquiesce in his infinite

goodness, as the only moving and impelling cause." (Pearson on the Creed.)

From all that we can learn of the nature of God himself, and the character of his administration toward his creatures, we are led to infer that, in the creation of man, the great object was the development of the divine perfections, and the happiness of intelligent creatures. Any thing repugnant to, or falling short of, this pure and exalted object, would be so derogatory to the divine character, and so palpably inconsistent with what we see of the divine administration, as to be utterly incapable of commanding the assent of an intelligent mind.

2. If the correctness of this statement, in reference to the design of God in creation, be admitted, we inquire, in the next place, whether the noble and exalted powers with which man was originally endued were, in their nature, calculated to promote this design. Now, it must be admitted that the Almighty was not only perfectly free to create or not to create, but also to create man *as* he was created, or a being of vastly superior or inferior powers. This being the case, it must follow that Infinite Wisdom saw that the grand design of creation would be best promoted by producing beings of precisely the character with which man was primarily constituted. If we deny this conclusion, we arraign the divine perfections, and charge the Creator with folly! As we dare not do this, we inquire, What was the primitive character of man? We learn from St. Paul that "he was made a little lower than the angels;" that "he was crowned with glory and honor;" that he was "set over the works" of the divine hand; and that "all things" were put in "subjection under his feet." Now, it appears from this that man was originally formed, not only superior to inanimate creation—to stocks and stones that cannot feel—but also superior to irrational, sentient existences — to "birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." In a word, he was made a free and morally accountable agent. Endued with rational powers, capable of discerning between right and wrong, he was a being calculated to reflect the glories of the great Creator by a proper exercise of the exalted powers conferred upon him. He was capable of enjoying God, from which alone solid happiness can spring. And this capacity resulted from his nature, as a free moral agent. Hence it will appear that the endowment of free agency, originally conferred upon man, was calculated to promote his own happiness, and to exhibit the glorious perfections of the Creator, which, as we have seen, accords with the grand design in creation.

3. From the character of man as a free moral agent, it necessarily follows that he must be placed under a law adapted to his nature. There

is apparent a fitness and harmony throughout the system of the universe, which necessarily results from the perfections of Him who made all things. The various parts of the works of God are placed in situations suitable to their nature: thus the fish are assigned to the aqueous element, while the birds are allowed to fly in the air. The entire material universe is placed under a system of government correspondent to its nature, known by the appellation of *physical laws*, or *laws of nature*. To have placed mere matter under a system of moral government, would have been a blunder too glaring to be possible for Infinite Wisdom.

Equally absurd would it be for irrational, sentient beings to be placed under a law suited only either to unorganized, lifeless matter, or intellectual moral agents. How then could we suppose that the infinitely wise Creator would produce a race of rational, intelligent beings, endued with free moral agency, as we have seen men to be, and leave them either without a law for the government of their actions, or place them under a system of government not suited to their nature? The idea is most preposterous, and disgraceful to the divine character. To have placed man under the regulation of laws only suited to lifeless matter, would have been to reduce him to the character of a clod or a pebble; to have placed him under laws suited to irrational, sentient beings, would have been to reduce his character to the level of "the beasts which perish;" but to have left him entirely destitute of law, would have been to strike him from existence at a blow; for all creation, whether material or immaterial, whether rational or irrational, is, by the wise arrangement of the great Ruler of the universe, placed under a system of government completely adapted to the diversified character of the things to be governed.

This beautiful and harmonious adaptation of law to the character of the creatures of God, necessarily results from the infinite perfections of the Creator; so that it cannot possibly be otherwise, unless we would destroy the divine government, and annihilate the perfections of Jehovah. From the principles here laid down, the truth of which we think cannot be denied, it will necessarily follow that either to have left man without a rule for the government of his conduct, or to have given him a law not suited to his character as a moral agent, would have been either to have made him something entirely different from what he was, to have destroyed his very existence, or, what is far worse, to have deranged or annihilated the perfections of the great Creator himself.

4. In the next place, we notice that this law, adapted to the character

of man, under which we have seen that he must have been placed, must necessarily be of such a character that man may either obey or disobey it. Whatever theory we may adopt in reference to the freedom of the human will, if it would deprive an accountable moral agent of the power to do either good or evil, we may rest assured that it is false. A moral, accountable agent must, of necessity, possess this power; otherwise you might as well speak of rewarding the sparks for "flying upward," or of punishing the rivers for discharging their waters into the ocean. Hence it will follow that the law under which man was placed was such that he might have kept it, although he was free to disobey it. There is no possible way of avoiding this conclusion, but by denying the character in which man was created, which, as already shown, would arraign the attributes of his Creator.

Again, as the grand design of the Almighty in the creation of man was *that his own glory might be displayed in the happiness of his creatures*, it was therefore necessary, for the attainment of this end, to promote the *obedience and virtue* of man. That happiness is necessarily connected with obedience and virtue, is one of the plainest principles of philosophy, as well as religion. "To be good is to be happy," has become a maxim of acknowledged truth. Vice produces misery, as a necessary and invariable consequence. Hence the Almighty, in order to secure the happiness of man, endeavored, by all appropriate means, to secure his obedience and virtue. But this could only be accomplished by placing him under appropriate law; for where there is no law or rule of action, there can be no obedience, no transgression, no virtue, no vice; in a word, without law, there can be neither moral good nor evil; there can be no distinction in the qualities of actions; nor can we see how an intelligent, accountable agent could exist.

5. In the next place, it would follow that, in order to carry out the original design of the happiness of man, this suitable law must be plainly prescribed. A law unrevealed can be of no avail. How can man be expected or required to perform his duty, unless he be informed of its nature? Hence, at the first creation, the Almighty made a plain revelation of his will to man. None can know the mind of God but by revelation from him; hence to deny revelation, would be to deny that the will of God is the law under which man is placed; or otherwise we must deny the accountability of man, and discard the entire system of rewards and punishments.

6. But, again, it must be obvious that the revelation to man of a suitable law for the government of his conduct, can be of no avail unless there be affixed an adequate *penalty*. In fact, a law without a penalty is a

contradiction in terms—a manifest absurdity. The moment you abstract the penalty, the quality of *law* ceases, and the command can be nothing more than *mere advice.* Therefore we see clearly the propriety, and even the absolute necessity, of annexing to the law an adequate penalty. With divine authority and consistent propriety it was said, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely *die.*"

It has been contended by some, who admit the propriety of what they would be pleased to call an adequate penalty, that the penalty of death here specified was unnecessarily severe; therefore, although this point has been touched in the discussion of the fall of man, some farther observations may, in this place, be necessary.

It must, then, be admitted, in the first place, that the prime object of penalty is to prevent crime, so far as this can be accomplished without destroying the moral agency and accountability of man. Had it been possible so to frame the penalty of the law as either to prevent the possibility of obedience on the one hand, or of disobedience on the other, the necessary consequence would have been that man could no longer be rewardable or punishable, but must sink to the station of inanimate or irrational creation. Hence it is plain that, in the selection of the penalty for the Adamic law, the Almighty not only had respect to the prevention of crime, and the promotion of the happiness of his creatures, but also to the preservation of the great principles of his moral government, as well as the security to man of his high dignity of free moral agency and accountability to God. When these great essential objects, for the accomplishment of which the penalty was designed, are taken into the account, it is utterly impossible for man, with his limited powers, to say, without the most daring presumption, that the penalty was not the most appropriate that could possibly have been selected.

It is certain that if the penalty has any influence at all, in proportion as it is increased in severity will the probability of obedience be increased. Therefore, to say that the threatened penalty was too severe, is in effect to say that the probability for disobedience, and consequent misery, should have been rendered greater than it was. With how little semblance of reason this can be contended for, will be manifest, when we reflect that, great as the penalty was, it did not absolutely secure obedience; the event shows that man did transgress. Surely, then, there could have been no necessity for adding to the probability of that event. We think it must be admitted that it is impossible for man, *a priori*, to determine how great the penalty must have been, to have destroyed his accountability, by giving too great security to obe-

dience; or how small it must have been, to have destroyed his accountability by giving too great security to disobedience. For any thing that we can certainly know, the smallest increase or diminution of the penalty might have wrested from man his character as a free moral agent, and rendered him utterly unfit for either reward or punishment.

Once more: that it is obviously inconsistent for a believer in the truth of revelation to cavil about the nature of the penalty of the original law, must be admitted, when we reflect that it amounts virtually to an impeachment of the divine attributes. To say that the Divine Being did not so comprehend the entire character and relations of his own creatures, as to know certainly what description of penalty was the best calculated to promote his grand design in creation, is directly to assail his wisdom. To say that he chose to affix one penalty to the law, when he knew that another was better suited to the grand end in view, is an impudent attack upon his goodness. Hence it will follow that, unless we venture to assail the divine perfections, if we admit the truth of revelation, which declares explicitly, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely *die*," we are compelled to admit that the annexed penalty was the most appropriate, and the best calculated to promote the grand design in man's creation, of any that could have been selected. He whose wisdom and goodness are so gloriously exhibited throughout his works, in the perfect adaptation of the means to the end, cannot be supposed, in reference to the moral government of man—the most important being belonging to sublunary creation—to have blundered so egregiously as to have selected inappropriate means for the accomplishment of his excellent and glorious purpose.

7. The only remaining consideration, in order that we may arrive at the ground of necessity for the atonement, is for us to ascertain whether there was a necessity for the execution of the penalty, after the law had been violated; or whether it might have been remitted, independently of satisfaction or expiation. To this inquiry we reply, that every consideration which urged the propriety of the threatening, or even of the establishment of the law itself, with equal propriety and force demanded the execution of the penalty. To affix a penalty to a law, and then permit disobedience to pass with impunity, and the threatened penalty to be entirely forgotten or disregarded, would be perfect mockery. Therefore, when man transgressed, the truth, justice, mercy, and all the attributes of God, as well as the stability and honor of the eternal throne itself, cried aloud for the execution of the penalty of the violated law.

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1. Those who have denied the necessity, and consequently the reality, of the atonement, have contended that the Almighty might consistently, by the exercise of his mere *prerogative* as Governor of the universe, have extended pardon to the sinner, without any satisfaction or condition whatever. To this we reply, that perhaps such might be the case, provided the Almighty were destitute of moral character, and regardless of moral principle. But a little reflection will show that such a course of procedure would be at war with the holy and immutable perfections of God.

(1) God had positively denounced the penalty—"In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt *surely die.*" This was the unequivocal language of God himself. Had no regard been paid to this after man had transgressed, where would have been the *truth* of God? And what kind of a lesson on the subject of veracity would herein have been inculcated upon the intelligent universe?

(2) Upon this principle, where would have been the *justice* of God? Had not the affixing of the penalty been in accordance with the eternal rectitude of the divine character, it never could have been threatened, and if so, it will necessarily follow that the same immutable principles of rectitude which first authorized the penalty will require its execution. Indeed, to say that God has a right to remit a threatened penalty, independently of satisfaction or atonement, is to deny that he has the right to execute it; for a right to inflict a penalty, or punishment, can only be founded upon the supposition that it is just. And if it be in accordance with justice to inflict the penalty, it must follow that if it be not inflicted, the claims of justice are infringed.

Again, upon the supposition that God has a right to remit any penalty, by the mere exercise of his prerogative, it would follow that, upon the same principle, he may remit every penalty, and that not only in reference to its severity, but to its whole extent and influence. And if it be right, according to the principles of justice, to remit all penalty and punishment, it cannot be consistent with goodness to inflict any punishment whatever; for it is most clear that the goodness of God must always seek the happiness of his creatures, so far as it can be done consistently with his rectitude. Thus it appears that pardon without an atonement, on the principle of prerogative, would deprive the Almighty of all right to punish offenders, nullify the principles of justice, and overturn the government of God altogether.

(3) But, in the next place, it may easily be seen that the above plan of pardon by prerogative, independent of atonement, is also repugnant to the *goodness* of God. The grand object of law is the happiness and

well-being of the intelligent universe. The great Governor of all can not act upon the principle of clearing the guilty without inflicting a positive injury on the innocent; for it is to the interest of all intelligent beings that the divine government be sustained. Upon its stability depends, not only their happiness, but their very existence itself. Let it be known that crime is not to be punished, that law is merely a form, and threatened penalty but a mockery, and who can tell the consequence that would immediately result throughout the vast extent of God's moral dominions? A license for universal rebellion would be proclaimed, and soon the intelligent universe would become a ruinous wreck. With such an example of disregard for principle in the divine administration before them, what hope could there have been that man, or any of the subjects of God's moral government, could afterward have paid any regard to the divine command? Therefore the divine *goodness* itself, which would prevent the universal prevalence of anarchy and rebellion, and the consequent misery and eternal ruin of millions of worlds, joins her voice with the pleadings of *justice*, for the honor and security of the divine throne, for the preservation of the principles of immutable rectitude in the divine administration, and for the promotion of the happiness of God's intelligent creatures, in opposition to the ruinous scheme of pardon by *prerogative*, independent of atonement.

2. In the next place, we will notice that some have contended that, even if there were a doubt with regard to the propriety of extending pardon by *prerogative* to all classes of transgressors indiscriminately, there can be no doubt of its propriety and fitness on the condition of *repentance*. This is the ground taken by Socinus, and it has been strenuously insisted upon by Dr. Priestley, and the modern Socinians and Unitarians generally. But that it is alike repugnant to reason, fact, and Scripture, we think may be easily shown.

(1) Let it be remembered, that to plead for the propriety of pardon on the ground of *repentance*, is, in effect, to acknowledge that it cannot consistently be conferred by the mere prerogative of God, by which it has been contended that he may relax his law at pleasure, and relinquish his right to punish the sinner. To say that repentance is required as the condition, is to admit that there is something in the principles of unbending rectitude by which the divine government is swayed, that would render it improper to pardon offenders indiscriminately, merely on the principle of mercy. This scheme, then, evidently acknowledges the necessity of a satisfaction of some kind, in order to pardon; but the question is, whether that satisfaction is bare repentance.

Here we may observe, in the second place, that the word *repentance*, in the Scriptures, is taken in two different senses; but in neither acceptation can it furnish a just and independent ground for pardon.

First, it means sorrow for sin, induced solely by the apprehension or realization of the dreadful punishment and misery necessarily resulting therefrom, without being founded upon any pure principle of hatred to sin on account of its intrinsic moral evil, or leading to any genuine reformation of heart and life. The dispensing of pardon upon a repentance of this kind, is not only destitute of the least countenance from fact and Scripture, but it would be as completely subversive of all moral government as if no condition were required whatever. Were this principle admitted, it would follow that God is bound to extend pardon to every repentant criminal, and that, too, as soon as he begins to repent. This is contradicted by the fact that all men, even after they repent of their sins, are left in this world to suffer more or less the evil consequences thereof. Now, if repentance is the only and sufficient ground for pardon, every repentant sinner should immediately be released from all punishment whatever. But again, is it not evident that any sinner, so soon as all hope of advantage from crime were gone, and he began to feel the just punishment of his sins, would immediately begin to repent; and thus, no sooner would the punishment begin to be felt, than it would be removed? This would in effect overturn all government, and proclaim complete and immediate indemnity for all transgression.

In the next place, *repentance*, in the Scriptures, is taken for that sincere and heart-felt sorrow for sin, on account of its intrinsic evil and offensiveness in the sight of a holy God, which leads to a reformation of heart and life, from pure and evangelical principle.

In reference to a repentance of this kind, we remark, in the first place, that, independent of grace received through the atonement of Christ, it is utterly out of the power of any man thus to repent. This necessarily follows from the totally depraved character of man as a fallen sinner, which has already been discussed. Now, to make this repentance, which can only result from the atonement of Christ, a consideration by which the necessity of that atonement shall be superseded, is manifestly absurd. But even if we admit the possibility of repentance, in the full sense of the word, independent of the atonement, this repentance could nevertheless be no just ground for pardon. It could not change the relation of the sinner to the violated law. He would still be charged with the guilt of transgression, however penitent he might be. This guilt nothing but pardon can remove. Were it the

case that repentance could remove the guilt of the sinner, independent of pardon, then pardon itself would be entirely superseded.

(2) Again, it is clear that *repentance*, however sincere it may be, and however great the immediate benefits resulting from it, can have no retrospective bearing, so as to cancel past offense. Were it true that full and immediate pardon flows directly consequent upon repentance, then it would follow that the broken constitution of the intemperate, the wasted fortune of the profligate, and the blasted character of the criminal, would, upon reformation of heart and life, immediately be restored: but such is evidently not the fact. As in reference to the things of this life, repentance, while it may deliver us from falling again into such crimes and misfortunes as we have forsaken and endeavored to escape, cannot immediately deliver us from the bitter consequences of past misdoings and folly; so, upon the same principle, in reference to spiritual things, while it may prevent a farther accumulation of guilt, and an exposure to increased punishment, it cannot affect the past, so as to remove the guilt, and release from the punishment already contracted and incurred.

(3) Again, to suppose that *repentance* can purchase exemption from punishment incurred by past offense, is to suppose that we are not continually indebted to God the full tribute of all the service we are capable of rendering. If the service of to-day may not only meet the demands of God upon us for the time being, but also enable us to satisfy the unliquidated claims of yesterday, then it follows that it is possible for us to perform works of supererogation — to do more than God requires of us, and thus procure a surplus of merit, which we may transfer to the benefit of our more destitute neighbor, or by which we may accumulate an account in our own favor, so as to bring the Almighty, according to strict principles of law, actually in our debt. How absurd the hypothesis!

(4) Once more: a close examination of the subject will show that pardon, upon the principle of *repentance alone*, is *self-contradictory and absurd*. To say that pardon is based upon repentance, is to admit that it cannot take place otherwise; and if so, then it would follow that there must be a hindering cause; but no hindering cause can exist, except the obligations of the Almighty to maintain the principles of his moral government. But if the Almighty is under obligations to maintain the principles of his moral government, then it will follow that he is not at liberty to pardon, even the penitent offender, without an atonement, or expiation for past guilt; for the law denounces "death as the wages of sin," irrespective of penitence or impenitence. Thus it appears

that pardon for sin without atonement, whether the sinner be penitent or impenitent, would be repugnant to the principles of law; and this plan of pardon would abrogate the divine government, as really as it could be done by the system of pardon on the principle of mere prerogative.

(5) Finally, *the Scriptures give no countenance* to either of these modes of pardon. It is therein declared that God "will by no means clear the guilty." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "The wages of sin is death;" and, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." These are the statutes of the divine government; and they stand with equal force against the penitent and the impenitent; nor can they, in the least, mitigate their rigor, or release their hold upon the criminal, however penitent he may be, till their claims are met, and their full demands satisfied, by an adequate atonement.

It is true that the Scriptures present the promise of mercy to the sincere penitent; but it is not upon the ground or merit of repentance, but through the atoning sacrifice of Him who is "exalted a Prince and a Saviour, for *to give repentance* to Israel and forgiveness of sins." Thus have we seen that the *necessity* for the great work of the atonement of Christ is founded upon the principles of the divine government, taken in connection with the grand design of the Almighty in the creation of man, as well as the true character of man as a free moral agent, who, by the abuse of that liberty, has fallen under the penalty of a violated law, and consequently lies in a state of guilt and misery.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XVI.

QUESTION 1. What is the only passage in which the word *atonement* occurs in the New Testament?

2. What is the Greek word there used, and what does it mean?

3. What is the Hebrew word for atonement, and what does it mean?

4. What is the definition as given by lexicographers generally?

5. How is the word understood in a theological sense?

6. Upon what important doctrine is the atonement founded?

7. What is the Socinian view of the atonement?

8. Explain the Arian view of the subject?

9. What is the ground of necessity for the atonement?

10. What was the grand design in the creation of man?

11. What was the primitive character of man?

12. Did that character accord with the design in creation?

13. How does it appear necessary that man should have been placed under law?

14. What description of law was essential for his government?

15. From what does the adaptation of law to the subject result?

16. Why was it necessary that man should be capable of either obeying or disobeying the law?

17. Why was it requisite to promote the obedience of man?

18. What was the only method by which this could be accomplished?

19. Why was it requisite that the law should be prescribed?

20. Why was the affixing of a penalty necessary?

21. How can it be shown that the most suitable penalty was selected?

22. Why was it necessary to execute the penalty?

23. What two grounds of pardon have been presented by those who deny the atonement?

24. How does it appear that pardon on the principle of mere prerogative is impossible?

25. Why cannot pardon be on the ground of repentance?

26. In what two senses is repentance understood?

27. How does it appear that pardon on the ground of repentance is repugnant to acknowledged fact?

28. How does it appear that it is repugnant to Scripture?

29. How is the necessity for the atonement shown in this chapter?

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ATONEMENT — ITS NATURE — PATRIARCHAL AND MOSAIC SACRIFICES.

HAVING seen, in the preceding chapter, the *necessity* for the atonement, we now enter upon the investigation of its *nature*.

No subject connected with our holy religion has been attacked by unbelievers with more virulence than this. They have summoned to the onset the utmost power of invective and raillery which their ingenuity could devise and their venom employ. But in no part of their wanton assault upon the principles of religion have they more glaringly exhibited their disingenuousness and their ignorance. That they may oppose with success, they first misrepresent. Their version of the Christian doctrine of atonement has been generally presented in something like the following miserable caricature: "That the Almighty created man holy and happy; but, because he simply tasted an apple, he instantly became enraged against him and all his posterity, until he had wreaked his vengeance by killing his own innocent son, when he immediately got over his passion, and was willing to make friends with man." Such is the horrible and blasphemous figment of the doctrine of atonement exhibited by infidels, for the fiendish purpose of scorn and ridicule. But how vastly different is this from the truth! Let unbelievers first inform themselves correctly, and they will find less reason to scoff and deride.

But "to the law and to the testimony." With the most implicit reliance upon its truth, we appeal to the word of God for information upon the important subject before us.

We will endeavor to establish the grand and leading proposition, that *the death of Christ is, according to the Scriptures, the meritorious and procuring cause of man's salvation.*

The whole doctrine of atonement is evidently based upon the proposition now before us, and consequently we shall endeavor carefully to *define the terms* of the proposition before we bring the subject to the test of Scripture.

First, by the "meritorious and procuring cause of salvation," we

mean more than is admitted upon the Socinian hypothesis. Even by this scheme, which, perhaps, the most of all schemes depreciates the merits of Christ, his death is not entirely discarded as useless, and in every sense of the word disconnected with human salvation. But if we inquire in what sense the death of Christ is connected with salvation, according to this system, it will be seen to allow no *merit*, in the proper sense of the word, but only to admit an indirect influence to his death as it sealed the truth of his doctrine, honored him as a martyr, and thus became instrumental in leading men to repentance, by which they would necessarily be saved, whatever may be the circumstances or instrumentality by which that repentance is produced. By this scheme it will readily be seen that *repentance*, and not *the death of Christ*, is the meritorious cause of salvation; and the death of Christ cannot, in the proper sense, be considered as strictly necessary, since the death of any other being, as well as many other circumstances, might be instrumental in inducing men to repent.

Secondly, by the "meritorious and procuring cause of salvation," we mean more than is admitted by the modern Arian hypothesis. By this scheme, the death of Christ is only necessary to salvation as it gives an exhibition of his disinterested benevolence, in voluntarily submitting to sufferings so great in the behalf of others; and thus enables him, as Mediator, to claim the salvation of sinners as his reward. This scheme, it may be observed, destroys the absolute necessity for the death of Christ, inasmuch as it makes salvation depend solely on the personal virtue and dignity of the character of the Mediator. Now, it is clear that the actual sufferings of Christ could not add any thing to the intrinsic virtue and personal dignity of his character. He was a being of the same exalted character before his incarnation, and possessed quite as much benevolence before his sufferings; and it cannot be supposed that his actual humiliation and matchless sufferings were necessary to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Father, the excellency of the character of his immaculate Son. Had this been the only necessity for the death of Christ, well might it have been dispensed with; and we may rest assured that the benevolence of the Father could never have required it.

But by the phrase, "meritorious and procuring cause of salvation," as applied to the death of Christ, we mean, 1. That there were obstructions in the way of man's salvation, which could not possibly be removed without the death of Christ. 2. That his sufferings were vicarious and expiatory; that he died in our room and stead, to satisfy the claims of law against us, and thereby to render it possible for God to extend to

us the mercy of salvation, on such terms as his wisdom and goodness might devise and propose. This we present as the full and absolute sense in which the death of Christ was necessary to man's salvation, and as the proper scriptural view in which the atonement of Christ is the "meritorious cause of salvation." The doctrine here briefly stated occupies so important a position, and stands so conspicuously to view throughout the entire volume of revelation, that a mere quotation of all the passages in which it is contained, would be a transcript of a large portion of the Holy Scriptures.

So deeply interwoven is the doctrine of atonement with the whole system of revelation, that it is not only expressly presented in numerous passages of the New Testament, but adumbrated, with a greater or less degree of clearness and force, in the types and predictions of the Old Testament. Many of these, it is true, considered in an isolated state, are not sufficiently definite and explicit to amount to satisfactory proof; but, taken in connection with the general tenor of Scripture upon this subject, and with the direct and unequivocal declarations with which the whole system of revelation abounds, their evidence is too weighty to be entirely overlooked.

I. SCRIPTURE PROOF ADDUCED. An intimation, too clear to be misunderstood, concerning the incarnation and sacrificial sufferings of Christ, is contained in *the first promise* or announcement of a Redeemer after the Fall.

God said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen. iii. 15. Here, we may observe, there is an intimation of a character styled the "seed of the woman," and consequently human in one sense, who must be superhuman, or at least superior to Adam, in another sense; for he is to "bruise the head" of the serpent, or gain a signal victory over him, who had just gained so great a triumph over Adam.

Observe, in the second place, that this triumph is not to be a bloodless conquest: it is not to be gained without a struggle, and, at least, some degree of suffering, for the serpent was to "bruise the heel" of "the seed of the woman." This evidently refers to the sufferings of Christ, by which redemption from the miseries of the Fall was to be extended to man. Now, as Christ, who is universally admitted to be the "seed of the woman" here spoken of, "did no sin," but was perfectly innocent, we can see no consistency in his "heel being bruised," or in his being permitted to suffer in the least, unless it was by way of expiation, in the room and stead of others; therefore we see in this ancient promise

at least a dawn of light upon the doctrine of atonement through the sufferings of Christ.

II. Our next argument on this point is based upon the *sacrificial worship of the ancient patriarchs.*

There can be but little doubt with regard to the origin of animal sacrifices. Were there no historic record upon this subject, it would appear, *a priori,* impossible for this system of worship to have originated with man. There is nothing in nature which could have led unassisted human reason to infer that God could be propitiated by the blood of slain victims. So far as reason alone is concerned, a conclusion quite opposite to this would have been the most natural.

Sacrificial worship must have originated by *the appointment of God.* This may be clearly inferred from the Mosaic history. Immediately after the Fall, it is said, "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." Commentators are generally agreed that the skins here spoken of were taken from animals slain in sacrifice as a sin-offering to God. As yet, the ravages of death had not entered the world, nor had the use of animal food been allowed to man; therefore the most rational inference is, that God, immediately after the Fall and the first promise of a Redeemer, by his own express appointment, instituted sacrificial worship, connected with the duty of faith in Him who, by the offering of himself in the fullness of time, was to "bruise the head of the serpent," and atone for the sins of the world. That this is the true origin of sacrifices, may be strongly inferred from the fact that Abel and others of the patriarchs were soon engaged in similar worship. It could not have been an invention of their own, for they are said to have performed it "by faith," which clearly implies, not only the divine authority for the institution, but also its typical reference to the promised Messiah, the great object of true faith in all ages.

The following remarks upon the passage before us are from the Commentary of Matthew Henry: "Those coats of skin had a significancy. The beasts whose skins they were must be slain—slain before their eyes—to show them what death is, and (as it is Eccl. iii. 18) that they may see that they themselves are mortal and dying. It is supposed they were slain, not for food, but for sacrifice, to typify the great Sacrifice which, in the latter end of the world, should be offered once for all: thus, the first thing that died was a sacrifice, or Christ in a figure, who is therefore said to be 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.'"

The following comment upon the same words is from Dr. A. Clarke: "It is very likely that the skins out of which their clothing was made were taken off animals whose blood had been poured out as a *sin-offering*

to God; for, as we find Cain and Abel offering sacrifices to God, we may fairly presume that God had given them instructions upon this head; nor is it likely that the notion of a sacrifice could have ever occurred to the mind of man, without an express revelation from God. Hence we may safely infer, 1. That as Adam and Eve needed this clothing as soon as they fell, and death had not as yet made any ravages in the animal world, it is most likely that the skins were taken off victims offered under the direction of God himself, and in faith of Him who, in the fullness of time, was to make an atonement by his death. 2. It seems reasonable, also, that this matter should be brought about in such a way that Satan and death should have no triumph, when the very first death that took place in the world was an emblem and type of that death which should conquer Satan, destroy his empire, reconcile God to man, convert man to God, sanctify human nature, and prepare it for heaven."

Again, in Gen. vii. 2, we find the distinction of clean and unclean beasts specially mentioned. As this was previous to the flood, and consequently at a time when the grant of animal food had not as yet been made to man, it presents a strong evidence of the divine appointment of animal sacrifices at this early period. Unless we admit that God had given commandment for certain kinds of beasts to be offered in sacrifice, this distinction of clean and unclean beasts cannot be rationally accounted for. That this distinction was founded upon the divine institution of sacrificial worship, is farther evidenced by the fact that Noah was commanded to take with him into the ark a greater number of clean than of unclean animals; and as soon as he came forth from the ark, he engaged in the work of sacrifice. Now, if the clean beasts were such as had been appointed as proper for sacrifice, and especially as Noah offered sacrifices immediately upon leaving the ark, the propriety of a greater number of that description of animals being preserved is at once manifest.

Since, then, we find satisfactory evidence that animal sacrifices were thus early established by divine appointment, we cannot consistently deny that they were expiatory in their character. Death was declared to be the penalty of the original law; and it is one of the settled principles of the divine government that "the wages of sin is *death*." From this it would appear that, whatever may be the circumstances under which *death* takes place, it must have a direct connection with sin. This connection, so far as we can infer from the Scriptures, must either be of the nature of a penalty or of an atonement. If life be taken by the direct authority of God, and the being thus slain is not a substitute

or an offering in the behalf of others, the death which thus takes place must be the infliction of the penalty of the violated law; but wherever the idea of substitution is recognized, and the sufferings of death by the appointment of God are vicarious, there is no rational way of accounting for them but upon the admission that they are also expiatory. Now, as God commanded animal sacrifices to be offered by the patriarchs, as an act of religious worship, the institution must have had reference to the condition, and been designed for the benefit, not of the animals sacrificed, but of him who presented the offering. And what could there have been connected with the character of man but sin, to require this bloody sacrifice in his behalf? And in what way could man have derived any benefit therefrom, unless it was intended. in some sense, to expiate or atone for his sins?

Thus we discover that, from the very nature of animal sacrifices, their expiatory character may be rationally inferred. And in order to make the argument from the patriarchal sacrifices conclusive, in the establishment of the vicarious and expiatory character of the death of Christ, it is only necessary for us to admit that those sacrifices were typical of the great and only availing Sacrifice for sin. That this important point stands prominently recognized in the whole tenor of Scripture, will be abundantly seen in the sequel of this investigation.

1. The first act of sacrifice to God, of which we have any express record, is that of *Cain and Abel.*

"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? And if thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Gen iv. 3–7. With this account of the transaction we must connect St. Paul's comment upon the same. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Heb. xi. 4.

In reference to the transaction here recorded, there has been much written both for and against the divine appointment and expiatory character of the patriarchal sacrifices. But it is not necessary to our purpose to enter specially upon the many questions, in connection with this subject, which have engaged the attention of commentators and critics

We shall, however, endeavor to point out several circumstances connected with this sacrifice, which plainly indicate its expiatory character and typical reference to Christ, and which cannot be satisfactorily explained upon any other hypothesis.

(1) Let it be noted that, according to the comment of the apostle, the sacrifice of Abel was offered "*by faith.*" When we examine what is said in reference to the ancient worthies in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, we discover that their faith rested on certain promises; and the clear inference is, that such must also have been the case with the faith of Abel. But let us inquire what that promise was. Here, if we deny that Abel, in this transaction, was acting under divine instructions, in the performance of a religious service, we see no possible way in which his sacrifice could have been "offered *by faith.*" Hence we have the plainest evidence that this sacrificial worship was by the express appointment of God.

Again: unless we admit that the victims he presented were a sin-offering, expiatory in their character, and adumbrative of the offering of Christ as an atonement for the sins of the world, we can see no suitable object for the faith of Abel to have embraced in connection with the offering presented; nor can we see the least significancy in the character of the sacrifice. But if we admit that the offering of animal sacrifice by Abel was according to the appointment of God—a typical representation designed to direct the faith to the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"—the whole subject is at once plain and impressive.

(2) Notice the peculiar *character* of the offering of Abel as contra distinguished from that of Cain. The latter "brought of the fruit of the ground;" but the former "brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof." Now, if we admit that animal sacrifices, by the express appointment of God, were at once an acknowle lgment by the sacrificer of his own sin, and of his faith in the great atoning Sacrifice, the reason why the offering of Abel was "better" and more successful than that of Cain is at once obvious; but if we deny this, we can see no reason for the superiority of the one offering to the other.

(3) The apostle styles the offering of Abel "a *more excellent* sacrifice" than that of Cain. The word πλείονα, here rendered *more excellent*, has been the subject of criticism with the learned. Some have contended that it means a greater quantity, and others, a better quality, or kind, of offering. The translation of Wickliffe, it cannot be denied, is as literal a rendering as can be made. As Archbishop Magee has observed, though "it is uncouth, it contains the full force of the original

It renders the passage 'a *much more* sacrifice,' etc." Whatever may be the conclusion in reference to the sense in which this "much more" is to be taken—whether it relates to *nature*, *quantity*, or *quality*—it must be admitted that it points out the peculiarity in the offering of Abel, which gave it superiority with God over that of Cain, and became the testimony to Abel "that he was *righteous*." Now if God had ordained by express command that "righteousness," or justification, was to be obtained by faith in the atoning Saviour, and had instituted animal sacrifice as the typical representation of that atonement, the reasonableness and propriety of the whole procedure—the offering of Abel, the respect that God had to his offering, the righteousness he thereby obtained, and the divine testimony it gave him that his gifts were accepted—are all clearly exhibited. But if this be denied, we see no way of accounting for and explaining these circumstances. Hence we conclude that in the "offering" of Abel we have a clear typical representation of the vicarious and expiatory character of the death of Christ.

The following is presented by Archbishop Magee, as a brief summary of the conclusion of many of the ancient divines upon this subject: "Abel, in firm reliance on the promise of God, and in obedience to his command, offered that sacrifice which had been enjoined as the religious expression of his faith; while Cain, disregarding the gracious assurances that had been vouchsafed, or, at least, disdaining to adopt the prescribed mode of manifesting his belief, possibly as not appearing to his reason to possess any efficacy, or natural fitness, thought he had sufficiently acquitted himself of his duty in acknowledging the general superintendence of God, and expressing his gratitude to the Supreme Benefactor, by presenting some of those good things which he thereby professed to have been derived from his bounty. In short, Cain, the first-born of the Fall, exhibits the first fruits of his parent's disobedience, in the arrogance and self-sufficiency of reason rejecting the aids of revelation, because they fell not within its apprehension of right. He takes the first place in the annals of Deism, and displays, in his proud rejection of the ordinance of sacrifice, the same spirit which, in latter days, has actuated his enlightened followers, in rejecting the sacrifice of Christ."

2. The next instance of patriarchal sacrifices which we shall mention is the case of *Noah*, immediately on his leaving the ark.

"And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savor; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake." Gen. viii.

20, 21. Here, in order that we may see that Noah performed this act of worship in compliance with a previous appointment of God, it is only necessary for us—

(1) To reflect on the dispatch with which he engages in the work when he comes forth from the ark. There is no time for the exercise of his inventive genius, which we may suppose would have been requisite, had he not previously been familiar with this mode of worship.

(2) He "took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl;" which is an evidence that the distinction of clean and unclean animals was an appointment of God in reference to sacrifice, and consequently that the system of sacrifice connected with this distinction was also an appointment of God.

(3) The Lord approved this sacrifice: he "smelled a sweet savor;" which he could not have done had not this mode of worship been in accordance with his own institution.

(4) The sacrifice of *clean* animals here presented was typical of the atonement of Christ. This may be seen by the allusion to this passage in the language of Paul, in Eph. v. 2: "Christ hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a *sweet-smelling savor.*" Here, the words *ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας*, used by the apostle, are the same found in the Septuagint in reference to the sacrifice of Noah.

3. Again, we see the patriarch *Abraham*, on a memorable occasion in which he received a renewal of the gracious promise of God, engaging in the performance of animal sacrifice with the divine approbation.

"And he said unto him, Take me a heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another; but the birds divided he not." Gen. xv. 9, 10. In reference to this passage, Dr. Clarke says: "It is worthy of remark, that every animal allowed or commanded to be sacrificed under the Mosaic law, is to be found in this list. And is it not a proof that God was now giving to Abram an epitome of that law and its sacrifices which he intended more fully to reveal to Moses; the essence of which consisteth in its sacrifices, which typified 'the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world'?"

We will only add that we have, in this coincidence of the animals sacrificed by Abraham, and under the Mosaic law, a clear demonstration that the patriarchal sacrifices were of divine appointment; otherwise this coincidence is unaccountable.

In the twenty-second chapter of Genesis, we have a record of the remarkable faith of Abraham, in presenting his son Isaac as a burnt-offering on Mount Moriah, in obedience to the divine command. In Heb. xi. 17–19, we have the comment of St. Paul upon this subject: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."

(1) We have in this transaction a clear proof that animal sacrifices were originally instituted by divine appointment. This is evidenced by the considerations that God expressly commanded Abraham to go to Mount Moriah, and there offer a burnt-offering; that Abraham spoke of his intended sacrifice as of a service to which he had been accustomed; that Isaac, by asking the question, "Where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" discovered a familiarity with that mode of worship; and that God actually provided the lamb to be sacrificed instead of Isaac. All these circumstances testify that sacrificial worship was an institution of God.

(2) We here have a lively type of the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Abraham is said to have received Isaac "from the dead *in a figure.*" The word here rendered *figure* is *παραβολή*, *parable*, or *type*. Macknight paraphrases it thus: "*From whence* on this occasion *he received him*, by being hindered from slaying him, *even in order to his being a type of Christ.*" As we have here the testimony of the apostle to the fact that Abraham's sacrifice was adumbrative of the offering of Christ on Calvary for the sins of the world, we deem it unnecessary to dwell upon the many striking points of analogy between the type and antitype.

4. On the subject of the sacrifices of the patriarchs, the case of *Job* is worthy of particular attention.

With regard to the period in which this patriarch lived, there has been considerable controversy. Some have supposed that he lived subsequent to the giving of the law; but the more probable opinion is that he was contemporary with Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. At any rate, he does not appear to have been acquainted with the Mosaic ritual, or we might reasonably expect to find connected with his history some allusion to the giving of the law.

It is true, some have contended, and Dr. A. Clarke among the number, that the circumstance of Job offering "burnt-offerings" to God is a proof that he was acquainted with the Mosaic institution, and consequently that he lived subsequently to the exodus from Egypt. But, in

reply to this, it may be said that Abraham and Noah also presented "burnt-offerings" to God, and the same argument would prove that they also were acquainted with the Mosaic institution, which we know to be contrary to the fact of the history. The most consistent opinion is, that Job was contemporary with the ante-Mosaic patriarchs, and that we have in his history a comment upon the patriarchal religion, previous to the general spread of idolatry among the descendants of Noah.

An account of the sacrifice of Job is recorded in Job i. 5: "And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, [his sons and daughters,] and rose up early in the morning, and offered *burnt-offerings* according to the number of them all; for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually." That this mode of sacrifice was the regular practice of Job, and that the decided testimony is that he was pious and exemplary, are sufficient evidence that he was acting in obedience to a divine command, received through tradition or otherwise. But the fact that the supposition that his sons might have sinned was given as the reason for the sacrifice, is clear proof that it was expiatory in its character, and a typical representation of the great sacrifice of Christ.

To all that has been said in reference to the divine appointment and typical and expiatory character of the sacrifices of the patriarchal dispensation, it has been *objected* that the Mosaic history contains no direct account of the divine origin, and no express declaration of the expiatory character of these sacrifices. It is a sufficient reply to the above, to know that Moses does not profess to give a complete history of the patriarchal religion. What he says upon the subject is incidental and exceedingly brief. There is no express account of any moral code being delivered to the patriarchs between the time of the Fall and the law of Moses; yet the fact that "Abel's works were *righteous*," and Cain's works "were *evil*," is sufficient testimony that God had in some way prescribed to them their duty. Even so, the fact that God sanctioned the patriarchal sacrifices with his express approval, is clear evidence that they originated not in the invention of men, but in the appointment of God.

Again, we have the direct proof from the New Testament that Moses did not think it necessary to give a complete and full account of every thing connected with the patriarchal religion. Enoch prophesied concerning the day of judgment, and Abraham looked for a "heavenly inheritance, a better country;" and yet Moses makes no record of the prophesying of the one, or of the promise on which the faith of the

other was based. Therefore we conclude that the above objection to the view we have taken of the divine origin, and typical and expiatory character of the animal sacrifices of the ancient patriarchs, is perfectly groundless; and the argument derived from those sacrifices, for the vicarious and expiatory character of the death of Christ, is seen to be conclusive.

III. In the next place, we notice *the sacrifices prescribed under the Mosaic law.*

The argument for the expiatory character of the death of Christ, derived from this source, will not require an extensive and minute examination of the entire system of sacrificial worship as it is presented in the Mosaic dispensation. If it can be shown that animal sacrifices therein enjoined were expiatory in their character, and divinely constituted types of the sufferings and death of Christ, the true character of the atonement of Christ will be thereby established.

That we may the better understand the nature and design of the sacrifices under the law, we will first notice that the Mosaic law itself consisted of three distinct, though connected, parts—the *moral*, the *ceremonial*, and the *political*.

1. The *moral* law is summarily embraced in the decalogue, but comprehends also all those precepts throughout the books of Moses and the prophets, which, being founded on the nature of God and of man, are necessarily and immutably obligatory upon all rational and accountable creatures, without regard to time, place, or circumstance. In this acceptation of the term, the law of God is essentially the same in all ages; and the Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian dispensations are only different developments or exhibitions of the same grand principles of righteousness.

2. The *ceremonial* law comprehends that system of forms and religious ceremonies which God prescribed for the regulation of the worship of the Israelitish nation, and which constituted the peculiar characteristic of the Mosaic dispensation. This law had respect to times and seasons—to days, months, and years; but it especially embraced the regulations of the priesthood, the stated assemblages and regular festivals of the people, and the entire system of sacrificial worship.

3. The *political* law comprehended the civil jurisprudence of the Jewish people. This law was of divine appointment, but related peculiarly to the government of the Israelitish nation. It defined the rights, prescribed the mode of settling the controversies, and had jurisdiction over the lives of individuals.

This threefold character of law, under which the Jews, during the

Mosaic dispensation, were placed, must render their entire legal code somewhat complex; and admonish us that when sin is spoken of with them, it must be the transgression of one or more of these laws; and care should be taken to ascertain to what law it has reference. This important point being borne in mind, it will not be presumed that the taking away of sin through the piacular sacrifices of the ceremonial law was properly a moral ablution. As these sacrifices belonged to the ceremonial law, it is only contended that they were expiatory in a ceremonial sense. The atonement which they made was not a real acquittal from the guilt of moral transgression: it was a ceremonial cleansing. The distinction here specified is clearly recognized by St. Paul, in Heb. x. 4: "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should *take away sins*." Here the apostle is evidently speaking of the removal of moral guilt, or sin, in view of the moral law. *This*, ceremonial sacrifices could only remove in a *ceremonial*, not a *moral*, sense.

In Heb. ix. 13, the apostle speaks of the ceremonial cleansing and expiation of the sacrifices of the law in these words: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, *sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh*," etc. Here we perceive that the same sacrifices which we had just seen could not remove moral pollution, or cleanse the conscience, were efficacious in the removal of ceremonial pollution, or in the cleansing of the body. Now, if it can be shown that the sacrifices under the law were expiatory in a ceremonial point of view, and that this ceremonial expiation was typical of the only proper expiation for sin under the gospel, the argument from this subject for the expiatory character of the death of Christ will then be sufficiently manifest.

It should farther be remembered, that it is not necessary to this argument that *all* the sacrifices of the law should be shown to be expiatory in their character. Some of them were eucharistic, and others were mere incidental purifications of persons or things. All that is requisite to our argument is to show that there were some sacrifices which were expiatory and typical. Nor is it necessary to show that their expiatory character related to the law in every sense of the word; to show that it related to it in either the *political*, *ceremonial*, or *moral* sense, will be all that is required. To accomplish this, we think, will not be difficult.

To bring forward all the passages properly bearing upon this subject, would be unnecessarily tedious; we shall therefore only select a few.

(1) First, we refer to the yearly *feast of expiation*, Lev. xvi. 30, 34: "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from *all your sins* before the Lord. And this

shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel, for *all their sins*, once a year."

Now, let it be remembered that death, according to the law, is the penalty of sin, and that an atonement is here made by the offering of slain victims for all the sins of the people, and the inference is plain that, through the death of the animals, the people were saved from death, which was the penalty incurred by their sins; consequently the death of the victims was vicarious—in the stead of the death of the people; and also expiatory—it removed, ceremonially, their sins from them.

That this atonement was a substitution of the life of the victim for that of the sinner, may farther be seen from Lev. xv. 31: "Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, that they *die not in their uncleanness*."

(2) Again, the ceremony in reference to the *scape-goat* on the solemn anniversary of expiation, is peculiarly expressive of the transfer or removal of the sins of the people. The priest was to "put his hands on the head of the goat, and confess over him *all the iniquities* of the children of Israel, and *all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat;*" and then he was to "*send the goat away* by a fit man into the wilderness." If this ceremony was not indicative of an expiation or removal of sin, it will be difficult to perceive in it any meaning whatever.

(3) The celebrated feast of the *Passover*, instituted in commemoration of the deliverance of the Israelites, when the angel smote the first-born of Egypt, clearly shows that the life of the sinner was preserved by the death of the victim. The lamb was slain, and its blood sprinkled upon the posts of the doors; and wherever the blood was sprinkled, the destroying angel passed over and spared the lives of all within the house. Thus, by the blood of the slain lamb, was the *life* of the Israelite preserved.

IV. In the last place, upon this subject, we come to notice *the language of the New Testament*, in reference to the connection between the sacrifices of the law and the offering of himself by Christ as the great sacrifice for sin.

So full and pointed is the comment of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews, that it is difficult to conceive how any one can read that Epistle, and not be convinced that the Mosaic sacrifices were typical of the vicarious and expiatory sacrifice of Christ.

Heb. vii. 27: "Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to *offer up sacrifice*, first for his *own sins*, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he *offered up himself*." Heb. ix. 14: "How much more

shall the *blood of Christ*, who through the eternal Spirit *offered himself* without spot to God, *purge your conscience* from dead works to serve the living God." Heb. ix. 22–28: "And almost all things are by the law *purged with blood;* and *without shedding of blood is no remission.* It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the *figures of the true;* but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should *offer himself* often, as the high-priest entereth into the holy place every year with *blood of others;* for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared *to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.* So Christ was *once offered to bear the sins of many.*" Heb. x. 10: "By the which will we are sanctified through the *offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*" Heb. x. 12: "But this man, after he had *offered one sacrifice for sins*, forever sat down on the right hand of God." Heb. x. 14: "For by *one offering* he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

In the passages above quoted, the vicarious and expiatory character of the death of Christ, as typified by the sacrifices under the Mosaic law, is so clearly shown that, if we deny this doctrine, we may despair of ever finding a consistent meaning to these scriptures.

As corroborative testimony upon the subject before us, it may not be amiss to refer to the *sacrifices of heathen nations.* From what has already been said in reference to the origin of animal sacrifices, it will follow that, however much the institution has been perverted, the heathen nations have all derived their first notions upon this subject from revelation, transmitted through tradition. History testifies that scarce a nation has been known, either in ancient or modern times, that was not in the practice of offering sacrifices for the purpose of propitiating the Deity. Many of them went so far as, on occasions of great emergency, to offer up human victims. This was the case with the Phenicians, the Persians, the Egyptians, the Carthaginians, and also the learned Greeks and the civilized Romans; hence Cesar, in his Commentaries, states it as the doctrine of the Druids, that "unless the life of man were given for the life of men, the immortal gods would not be appeased."

Dr. Priestley has denied that heathen nations pretended to expiate sin by animal sacrifice; but he has met with a pointed rebuke from Dr. Magee, who directly charges him either with culpable ignorance or unfairness. Nor is he more leniently treated in the hands of Dr. Dick,

in his "Lectures," who says: "Either Dr. Priestley, who has made the strange assertion which I am now considering, had never read the history of the various nations of the human race, and in this case was guilty of presumption and dishonesty in pronouncing positively concerning their tenets; or, he has published to the world, with a view to support his own system, what he must have known to be utterly false. It would disgrace a school-boy to say that the heathens knew nothing of expiatory sacrifices."

The argument for the vicarious and expiatory character of the death of Christ, based upon the *system of sacrifice*, though not the main dependence of the advocates for the true doctrine of the atonement, must be seen, we think, from what has been said, to possess considerable force. Let it be remembered that the patriarchal and Mosaic sacrifices were of divine appointment; let the circumstances connected with the offerings of Abel, of Noah, of Abraham, and of Job, be well considered; let the institution of the Passover, and all the sacrifices under the law, be contemplated, together with the duties of the divinely constituted priesthood of the Jews; let the piacular offerings of the heathens be taken into consideration; and then let the declarations of the New Testament, especially of the Epistle to the Hebrews, be consulted, and the manner in which sacrificial terms are applied to the death of Christ, and we think that the conviction must force itself upon the mind of the unprejudiced, that, unless the whole system of patriarchal and Mosaic sacrifices was unmeaning mummery, and the writers of the New Testament designed to mislead their readers, the death of Christ upon the cross was a properly vicarious offering, in the room and stead of sinners, as an expiation for their sins.

The denial of this proposition would at once mar the beautiful symmetry which pervades the entire system of revelation, and render perfectly unmeaning, or force a far-fetched and unnatural construction upon, the institutions and a great portion of the word of God. Its admission beautifully and harmoniously connects the law and the gospel, the old and the new dispensations, and stamps the entire code of revelation with the sacred impress of consistency and truth.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XVII.

QUESTION 1. In what light has the Christian doctrine of atonement generally been presented by infidels?
2. What is the grand and leading proposition expressive of the true doctrine of the atonement proposed to be established?
3. What are the Socinian and Arian hypotheses on this subject?
4. What do we understand by the phrase, *meritorious and procuring cause of salvation?*
5. How may it be shown that the promise concerning "the seed of the woman" contained an intimation of this doctrine?
6. What was the origin of the patriarchal sacrifices?
7. How is this proved?
8. What is the evidence from the sacrifice of Abel?
9. Of Noah?
10. Of Abraham?
11. Of Job?
12. What is the grand objection to the divine origin of sacrifices?
13. How is it answered?
14. What is necessary to be proved, in order that the argument for the atonement, from the Mosaic sacrifices, may be conclusive?
15. What are the three distinct parts of which the Mosaic law consisted?
16. What is meant by each?
17. What is the distinction between a *moral* and a *ceremonial* expiation?
18. What is the evidence that St. Paul made this distinction?
19. Is it contended that all the sacrifices of the law were expiatory?
20. What is the Scripture proof in reference to the yearly expiation?
21. In reference to the scape-goat?
22. In reference to the Passover?
23. What are the allusions from the New Testament?
24. What is the probable origin of heathen sacrifices?
25. What is the proof from them?
26. Has the piacular character of heathen sacrifices been denied?
27. What has been replied?
28. How is the argument summed up?

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ATONEMENT — ITS NATURE — EXPIATORY CHARACTER OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

In the preceding chapter, the proper nature of the atonement has been argued from the typical institution of *the sacrifices of the Old Testament;* but, as has already been intimated, clear and conclusive as the evidence from that source may be, it is not the principal reliance of the advocates for the true doctrine of the atonement.

As the first dawn of morning light is succeeded by an increasing brilliancy, till the earth is illumed by the full glories of mid-day, even so the great doctrine of redemption through the blood of the everlasting covenant, which at first faintly gleamed from the illustrious promise of "the seed of the woman," continued to shine, with still increasing luster, through the consecrated medium of the types and shadows, the smoking altars, and bleeding victims, of the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations; till, at length, under the superior light and more glorious developments of gospel day, we behold the clear fulfillment of ancient predictions, the infallible comment upon the divinely instituted types, and the most explicit revelation of the great mystery of salvation, through the merits of the vicarious and piacular oblation of God's Messiah.

For a correct view of the doctrine of the atonement, we are not left to reason from ancient predictions and Jewish types alone, but we are furnished with an abundance of the plainest and most direct testimony. Let the true point of controversy be now borne in mind. That Christ died for us in such sense as to confer benefit upon us, Socinians, Arians, Unitarians, etc., admit; but the doctrine for which we contend is, 1. That he died *for us* as a proper *substitute*—in our *room and stead.* 2. That his death was *propitiatory*—a proper *expiation*, or *atonement*, for our sins. These are the points which are strenuously denied, especially by those who also deny the proper divinity of Christ; but, that they are expressly taught in the Scriptures, we shall now endeavor to show.

Now, the point is, to show that Christ died *for us*, as a proper *substitute.*

I. Our first argument is founded upon those passages in which Christ is *expressly declared to have died for us.*

1. That the preposition *ὑπὲρ*, translated *for*, sometimes merely signifies *on account of*, or, *for the advantage of*, is admitted; but that it also implies *instead of*, and that such is its meaning, as applied to the subject in hand, in the Scriptures, is what we shall endeavor to prove.

(1) That it is so used by the Grecian classics, cannot be disputed. Raphelius, in his "Annotations," affirms that "the Socinians will not find one Greek writer to support a different interpretation." One or two quotations are all we shall adduce: "Would you be willing *ὑπὲρ τούτου ἀποθανεῖν*," *to die* FOR *this boy?*—that is, would you be willing to die *in his stead?* — to save his life by the sacrifice of your own? Again: *Ἀντίλοχος τοῦ πατρὸς ὑπεραποθανών* — "Antilochus, *dying for* his father," obtained such glory, that he alone among the Greeks was called *Φιλοπάτωρ*. The context in these passages admits of no other construction than that of a proper *substitution.* (See Xenophon De Cyri Exped. et De Venat.)

(2) But that such is the sense of the preposition in the New Testament, may be seen from John xi. 50. Caiaphas said: "It is expedient for us that one man (*ἀποθάνῃ ὑμὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ*) should die *for* the people, and that the whole nation perish not." The meaning evidently here is, that the life of Christ should be taken to save the lives of the nation from the vengeance of the Romans. Rom. v. 7: "For scarcely (*ὑπὲρ*) *for* a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure (*ὑπὲρ*) *for* a good man some would even dare to die." Here the sense is plainly that of substitution—the life of one man for that of another. But see the next verse: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, (*Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανε,*) Christ died *for* us." Now, if *ὑπὲρ*, in the preceding verse, meant a plain substitution of life for life, it must, in all fairness of criticism, mean the same here, for it is a continuation of the same argument.

2 Cor. v. 21: "For he hath made him *to be* sin (*ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*) *for us*, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Here the sense evidently is, that Christ was made a sin-offering, as a *substitute for us.* In no other sense can it be said that he "was made *sin.*" The word *ἁμαρτίαν*, here rendered sin, is by Macknight and others translated *sin-offering.* So it is frequently used in the Septuagint. So also it is used in Heb. ix. 28: "And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, (*χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας,*) without a *sin-offering*, unto salvation." The scope of the apostle's argument will admit of no other interpretation So also it is used in Heb. xiii. 11: "For the

bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for (*ἁμαρτίας*) a *sin-offering.*" Now, it is clear, that the blood of beasts was offered "for sin" in no other sense than that of an expiation or atonement. Hence we perceive that Christ was "made sin for us" in no other sense than that of a vicarious offering. 1 Pet. iii. 18: "For Christ also hath once suffered *for sins*, the just (*ὑπὲρ*) *for* (or, *instead of*) the unjust." Rom. v. 6: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died (*ὑπὲρ*, *instead of*, or) *for* the ungodly." 2 Cor. v. 15: "And that he died (*ὑπὲρ*) *for* (or, *instead of*) all." Heb. ii. 9: "That he by the grace of God should taste death (*ὑπὲρ*) *for* (or, *instead of*) every man." 1 Tim. ii. 6: "Who gave himself a ransom (*ὑπὲρ πάντων*) *for* (or, *instead of*) *all.*"

2. Again: from the use of the Greek preposition *ἀντὶ*, we may also infer that the sufferings of Christ were vicarious. That this preposition implies commutation and substitution, we may see from Matt. v. 38: "An eye (*ἀντὶ*) *for* (or, *instead of*) an eye, and a tooth (*ἀντὶ*) *for* (or, *instead of*) a tooth." Also, see Matt. ii. 22: "Archelaus did reign in Judea (*ἀντὶ*) *in the room of* his father Herod." Now let us see how this same preposition is used in reference to our Lord. Matt. xx. 28: "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom (*ἀντὶ*) *for* (or, *instead of*) many."

If the foregoing quotations do not prove that Christ died as a substitute for us, we may confidently affirm that they prove nothing.

II. In the next place, to prove that the death of Christ was both vicarious and propitiatory, we appeal to those passages which speak of his *dying for our sins.*

Isa. liii. 4–6: "Surely he hath *borne our griefs*, and *carried our sorrows;* yet we did esteem him *stricken, smitten of God*, and *afflicted.* But he was wounded for *our transgressions*, he was bruised for *our iniquities*: the *chastisement* of *our peace* was *upon him;* and with *his stripes we are healed.* All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord *hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*" Verses 10 and 11: "Yet it pleased the Lord *to bruise him;* he *hath put him to grief:* when thou shalt make his soul *an offering for sin*, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he *shall bear their iniquities.*"

The passage just quoted is as plain and pointed as language will admit. Had the prophet written for the express purpose of vindicating the doctrine of atonement from the Socinian perversion, we do not see

how he could have more strongly presented the vicarious and expiatory character of the death of Christ. Observe, here, our Lord is said to have "*borne* our griefs and *carried* our sorrows;" our iniquity is said to have been "*laid on him;*" and he is said to "*bear the iniquities* of many."

In all this there is doubtless an allusion to the ceremony in reference to the scape-goat, upon which the priest laid his hands, and confessed over it the sins of the people, and then sent it away into the wilderness; but there is evidently more implied here than the bare removal of sin. This is implied, but the most emphatic meaning of the language is the bearing of the punishment due to sin. That this is the meaning of the phrase "to bear sin or iniquity" in the Scriptures, may be seen from Lev. xxii. 9: "They shall therefore keep mine ordinance, lest they *bear sin* for it, and *die* therefore, if they profane it." Here, to bear sin was to be exposed to death, the penalty of sin. See, also, Eze. xviii. 20: "The soul that *sinneth*, it shall *die*. The son shall not *bear* (die for) the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father *bear* (die for) the iniquity of the son."

Thus it will appear that, by our Saviour bearing our iniquities, as seen in the passage from Isaiah, we are plainly taught that he bore the punishment due to us on account of our iniquities; consequently his sufferings were vicarious and expiatory. Again, it is said: "He was *stricken, smitten* of God, *wounded, bruised, chastised;* it pleased the Lord *to bruise him,*" etc. Language cannot more plainly declare that the sufferings of Christ were a penal infliction for our sins. Again, by his sufferings we here learn that we procure "peace," "we are healed," we are "justified;" all of which testify that his death was properly propitiatory.

There is an allusion to this passage in Isaiah in 1 Pet. ii. 24: "Who his own self *bare our sins* in his own body on the tree, that we, being *dead to sins*, should live unto *righteousness;* by whose *stripes* ye *were healed.*" Here the expiatory character of the death of Christ is clear from the effects resulting from it. By it we are said to be "dead to sins," "alive unto righteousness," and to be "healed."

In Gal. iii. 13, we read: "Christ hath redeemed us from the *curse* of the law, being made a *curse for us;* for it is written, *Cursed* is every one that hangeth on a tree." The law had said: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." Consequently, as "*all* had sinned, and come short of the glory of God," *all* were exposed to this curse; therefore, as Christ, in this sense, became a curse for us, he must have suffered *in our room*, on account of our sins.

Rom. iv. 25: "Who was delivered *for our offenses.*" Here our offenses are presented as the antecedent cause of the sufferings of Christ; consequently they were expiated by his death.

III. Next, we refer to some of those passages which speak of *reconciliation, propitiation,* etc., as connected with the sufferings of Christ.

1 John ii. 2: "And he is the *propitiation for our sins;* and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world.*" Col. i. 20: "And having made *peace* through the *blood of his cross,* by him to *reconcile* all things unto himself." Rom. iii. 25: "Whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation,* through faith in *his blood,* to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Rom. v. 11: "By whom we have now received the (*καταλλαγὴν*) *atonement,*" (or *reconciliation.*)

The amount of these passages is equivalent to what is implied in being "saved from wrath through him"—that is, delivered from exposure to the penalty of his punitive justice. Again, we would notice some of those passages in which the salvation of the gospel is spoken of under the appellation of *redemption.* 1 Pet. i. 18, 19: "Ye were not *redeemed* with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious *blood of Christ,* as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Eph. i. 7: "In whom we have *redemption through his blood.*" The Greek words *λυτρόω, ἀπολύτρωσις,* properly imply the liberation of a captive by the payment of a *ransom,* or some consideration, without which he could not have been liberated; therefore we are here taught that the death of Christ is the procuring cause of salvation.

IV. Lastly, we notice that *justification,* or *the remission of sin,* and *sanctification,* are said to be connected with the death of Christ.

Acts xiii. 38, 39: "Through this man is preached unto you *the forgiveness of sins;* and by him all that believe are *justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.*" 1 John i. 7: "The *blood* of Jesus Christ his Son *cleanseth us from all sin.*" Rev. i. 5: "Unto him that loved us, *and washed us from our sins in his own blood.*" Matt. xxvi. 28: "For this is *my blood* of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the *remission of sins.*" Eph. i. 7: "In whom we have redemption *through his blood,* the *forgiveness of sins,* according to the riches of his grace." Rom. v. 9: "Much more then, being now *justified by his blood,* we shall be saved from wrath through him."

The evidence from Scripture for the vicarious and expiatory character of the death of Christ might be extended much farther, but we deem it unnecessary. If persons are disposed to abide by the express decla

rations of Scripture, what has already been adduced is sufficient; but if they are determined, at all hazards, to spurn the Bible doctrine of the atonement, they may, if they choose, form a creed to suit their own notions, and enjoy the luxury of fancying that it is the "perfection of beauty," however adverse it may be to the teachings of revelation. We think we may safely say that, had the inspired writers designed expressly to teach the vicarious and propitiatory character of the death of Christ, the passages we have adduced are admirably adapted to the accomplishment of that purpose; but had they designed to teach an opposite doctrine, it will be a difficult task to vindicate them from such a degree of ignorance of language, or disingenuousness of purpose, as would utterly discredit their claims to inspiration.

V. Having now established from the Scriptures the grand and leading *principles* of the atonement, as based upon the vicarious and expiatory character of the death of Christ, as the meritorious and procuring cause of salvation, we proceed, next, to illustrate more particularly the *reasonableness and propriety of the whole scheme.*

From what has already been said in reference to the necessity for the atonement, as originating in the principles of the divine administration, it will necessarily follow that, after man had violated the law of God, there was but one possible way in which the threatened penalty could, in any degree, be averted or removed, and guilty man rescued from the opening jaws of impending ruin. And we now inquire, What was that way of escape? What was the only door of hope to a ruined world? We answer, it was that something different from the precise penalty should be substituted, which would answer, as fully as the threatened penalty itself, all the legitimate purposes of the divine government. Now if it can be shown that the sufferings of Christ, in our room and stead, meet this requirement, and perfectly secure all the ends of the divine administration, the propriety of the great scheme of atonement which we have presented will at once be manifest, and the plan will be opened up to our view "by which God can be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

That the point now proposed may be clearly presented, it will be necessary for us to inquire what are the grand purposes of the divine government. These are—

1. To show God's hatred to sin, arising from the holiness of his nature. This is essential, in order that his holy and excellent character may be known and revered by his intelligent creatures. For if their happiness be connected with their duty, and their paramount duty be love to God, it is plain that they cannot be led to the exercise of that

love unless his character be presented to them in its native excellence and purity, as it was proclaimed unto Moses—"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will *by no means clear the guilty.*"

2. Another end of the divine government is, to show God's determination to punish the sinner. This is essential, that he may maintain dominion over the intelligent creation, and prevent general anarchy and rebellion, and consequent destruction, throughout all parts of the moral universe. If the "morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," at the birth of creation, may we not reasonably suppose that they were spectators of the fall of man? And what, we ask, would have been the effect upon, perhaps, millions of worlds, had the Almighty failed to require the penalty of the violated law? Would they not all have received license to sin with impunity? And would not the result probably have been fatal to the inhabitants of innumerable worlds? Therefore we conclude that the mercy of God, much more his justice, demanded satisfaction for a broken law, that the divine determination to punish sin might be strikingly exhibited for the safety and happiness of myriads of intelligent and accountable creatures, formed for happiness in communion with God.

Thus it appears to us that the two particulars above presented exhibit the grand ends of the divine government. Now if it can be made to appear that the sufferings and death of Christ, as a substitute, will subserve these purposes, as fully as the exact penalty threatened in its precise kind and degree, then it will follow that, by this arrangement, the honor of the divine throne may be sustained, the demands of justice satisfied, and yet mercy be extended to a fallen world. All this, we conceive, is fully accomplished in the divine plan and arrangement, as set forth through the merits of the crucified Immanuel.

That such is the fact, will more fully appear by the examination of several particulars.

(1) Consider *the exalted character of Christ.* Here we must view him as Mediator—as God-man, possessing all excellency and perfection; as "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." But we must also contemplate him in the endearing relation of the *Son* — the *only* Son — the *well-beloved* Son of God. For the Almighty to let fall his wrath upon a character so exalted, and so dearly beloved, rather than to violate the claims of justice, or give countenance to sin, surely is a far more illustrious exhibition of the holiness of his character, and his settled purpose not to clear the guilty at the

sacrifice of correct principle, than could have been presented by the eternal punishment of the whole human family.

(2) Notice *the freeness with which Christ was delivered up by the Father, and with which he consented to suffer for us.* Man had no claims upon God. God was under no obligations to man. All was free, unmerited mercy and compassion. God saw and pitied us, and ran to our relief. The Saviour voluntarily laid down his life. Surely these facts enhance the value of the sacrifice, and tend gloriously to exhibit the extent of the love, the holiness of the nature, and the sacredness of the justice of God.

(3) Next, notice *the nature and extent of the sufferings of Christ.* We do not pretend to say that he suffered, either in *kind* or *degree*, precisely the same that man would be required to suffer, if deprived of the benefits of redemption. Far from it, indeed. The very idea is monstrous and absurd.

He could not suffer the same *kind* of torment. One of the principal ingredients in the cup which the miserably damned are to drink, is the bitterness of remorse. This the Saviour could not taste.

Neither do we believe that he suffered to the same *extent* that man would have been required to suffer, had no atonement been provided. We cannot believe it: in the first place, because there is no intimation of the kind in the Bible; and, in the second place, because we think it unnecessary, unreasonable, and absurd. It was unnecessary, because of the superior merits of Christ. The value and efficacy of his atonement result mainly, not from *the intensity of his sufferings*, but the *dignity of his character.* It was the humanity, and not the divinity, which suffered. The humanity was the sacrifice, but the divinity was the altar on which it was offered, and by which the gift was sanctified. The sufferings were finite in their extent, but the sacrifice was of infinite value, by reason of the mysterious hypostatic union with the divinity.

(4) Again: the hypothesis is unreasonable and absurd, because it would mar the glorious exhibition of divine love in redemption. For if the full and exact penalty due to man, in kind and degree, was endured by the Saviour, where is the manifestation of the Father's benevolence? Redemption, upon this supposition, would not be a scheme of grace, so far as the Father is concerned; but merely a transfer of misery to a different object—from the *guilty* to the *innocent.* But, furthermore, an *endless degree* of punishment was due to man; consequently this punishment was infinite, at least in duration. But the sufferings of Christ, as they were not infinite in duration, so neither could they have been infinite in extent; otherwise they never could have termi-

nated. Infinite means *without limit.* But his sufferings were limited—they came to an end; consequently they could not have been infinite. Had they continued even an hour longer than they did, with their greatest intensity, it is evident they would have been greater, in the aggregate, than they were; therefore they were not infinite in extent. All the infinitude connected with them is applicable to the dignity of the sufferer, and not to the intensity of the agony.

(5) And if it be objected that the atonement cannot be satisfactory to justice, unless it equal the original penalty in the extent of suffering, we reply, that the same argument would prove that it must also correspond with the original penalty in the kind, as well as the degree, of misery; which we have seen to be impossible. All that is necessary is, that the sufferings be such as justice can accept as an adequate satisfaction, in the character of a substitute, for the original penalty. All that may be lacking in the extent of the suffering is amply made up in the superior, yea, the infinite dignity, of the sufferer. But, after all, we freely admit that the agony of our blessed Lord was great, beyond the power of language to describe, or of mere man to endure. "It pleased the Father to bruise him;" and he bore the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God.

(6) On the subject now under consideration, the following observations of a learned divine are appropriate and satisfactory:

"But how, it may be asked again, could the sufferings of Jesus Christ satisfy for the sins of 'a great multitude which no man can number, out of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues'? The common answer is, that the transcendent value of his sufferings was the consequence of the dignity of his nature, and it seems to be sufficient. His sufferings were limited in degree, because the nature in which he endured them was finite; but their merit was infinite, because the suffering nature was united to the Son of God, (the divinity.) An idea, however, seems to prevail, that his sufferings were the same in degree with those to which his people (all mankind) were liable; that he suffered not only in their room, but that quantum of pain and sorrow which, if he had not interposed, they should have suffered in their own persons through eternity; and so far has this notion been carried by some, that they have maintained that his sufferings would have been greater or less if there had been one more or one fewer to be redeemed. According to this system, the value of his sufferings arose, not from the dignity of his person, but from his power. The use of his divine person in this case was, not to enhance the merit of his sufferings, but to strengthen him to bear them. If this is true, it was not necessary that

he should have taken human nature into personal union with himself; it was only necessary that he should have sustained it; and this he could have done, although it had subsisted by itself. That the sufferings of the man Christ Jesus were greater than those which a mere mortal could have borne, will be readily granted; but, although it does not become us to set limits to Omnipotence, yet we cannot conceive him, I think, considered simply as a man, to have sustained the whole load of divine vengeance, which would have overwhelmed countless myriads of men through an everlasting duration. By its union to himself, his human nature did not become infinite in power; it was not even endowed with the properties of an angel, but continued the same *essentially* with human nature in all other men." (Dick's Theology.)

Those who imagine that Christ endured all the pain which "the millions of the redeemed were doomed to endure throughout the whole of their being," have taken an improper view of the whole subject. They have considered "our sins to be debts in a literal sense, and the sufferings of Christ to be such a payment as a surety makes in pounds, shillings, pence, and farthings."

Those who have represented "that one drop of the blood of Christ would have been sufficient to redeem the world," have erred on the opposite extreme. According to this, it might well be asked why he shed so many drops as he did, or why he "poured out his soul unto death." Therefore, while we admit that the sufferings of Christ were inconceivably great, we cannot believe that they were infinite in degree. Their transcendent value resulted from the union of the divine with the human nature.

From what has been said, we think it must appear that, through the sufferings and death of Christ, in our room and stead—although something different is accepted, instead of the exact penalty originally denounced — the ends of the divine government are fully answered, the holiness of God is exhibited, the claims of justice satisfied, and thus "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other;" and a new and living way is opened up for the extension of mercy to fallen man. All difficulties being removed—the law being "magnified and made honorable"—God can stoop to fallen man with offers of pardon, and the throne of justice stands secure.

VI. We conclude the present chapter by noticing a few of the prominent *objections* which have been urged against the view here taken of the atonement.

1. It has been said "that it is derogatory to the divine character to

suppose that God was angry with the human family, and could only be induced to love them by the death of his own Son."

To this we reply, that the doctrine of the atonement sets forth no such idea. It is true the divine justice demanded satisfaction, or the punishment of the criminal; and this fixed principle of the divine administration to punish the guilty is, in Scripture, denominated the *anger*, or *indignation*, of God; but no intelligent divine ever taught or believed that the Almighty is liable to be perturbed by the rage of that passion, in the sense in which it exists with men. This is so far from being true, that "God loved the world" with "the love of pity," or compassion, perhaps quite as much before the atonement was made as after it; yea, it was his love that induced him to send his Son to die for us; and therefore it is plain that this objection is founded upon a false assumption.

2. It has been objected "that it is contrary to justice to punish the innocent for the guilty."

To this we reply, that if the innocent sufferer undertakes voluntarily, in view of a rich reward which is to follow and a greater good which is to result, there is nothing in it contrary to strict justice, as recognized in the practice of the wisest and best of our race in all ages. The objection now under consideration must come with a bad grace from believers in the truth of revelation; for if it be unjust for the innocent to be punished in the room of the guilty, it must be unjust for the innocent to be punished under any circumstances. The ground of the injustice, if there be any, is not that the innocent is punished *for the guilty*, but that he is *punished at all.* Now, if we believe in the truth of revelation, we are compelled to admit, 1. That Christ was *perfectly innocent* —"he did no sin." 2. That he *was punished*—"it pleased the Father to bruise him." These are facts which we must discard our Bible before we can dispute.

The only question, then, for us to determine is, whether it comports more with the principles of strict justice, the purity of the divine administration, and the general tenor of Scripture, to say that the innocent Saviour was punished with the most excruciating pangs for no good cause—for no assignable reason whatever—or, to contend, as we have done, that his sufferings were voluntarily entered upon, in the room and stead of a guilty world of sinners, who had incurred the penalty of a violated law, from which they could only be released by the admission of a substitute. That the former position is far more objectionable than the latter, we think cannot be disputed. If we admit the former, we assume a ground in direct opposition to the plainest principles of

justice, as recognized by all enlightened governments upon earth, and as set forth in the Holy Scriptures; if we admit the latter, we are sustained by the theory and practice of the wisest and best of mankind, as well as the plain teachings of Holy Writ. Therefore the objection may be dismissed, as deserving no farther reply.

3. It has been objected that the view we have taken of the atonement is "contrary to the admitted facts that all men suffer, more or less, the penalty of the violated law in this life, and that some will still continue to suffer it in a future state."

(1) Now it is contended by the objector, that if Christ suffered this penalty in our room and stead, all for whom he suffered should be immediately and forever released therefrom; otherwise a double payment of the claims of justice is exacted, which would be unreasonable and derogatory to the divine administration. The objection here presented lies with full force against the view taken of the atonement by the Antinomians and many of the Calvinists, but it can have no application to that view of the subject which we have presented, and which we believe to be the scriptural account.

(2) Upon the supposition that Christ discharged the exact penalty of the law due from man, in the sense in which a surety would liquidate the debt of an insolvent individual, by the payment of the full demand in dollars and cents, it would most certainly follow that the debtor would be at once and forever discharged from all obligations to the creditor, and justice would require that all for whom the atonement was made should have immediate and complete deliverance from the penalty of the law which they had incurred. But such is far from being the true presentation of the subject. The very idea of a substitute implies that something different from the exact penalty is admitted in its place. And here it must also be confessed, that in the admission of Christ as a substitute, there is a relaxation of the rigor of law; for the Almighty was under no obligations to admit any compromise or commutation whatever, and, in strict justice, might have rejected every substitute, and enforced with rigor the threatened penalty, to the last jot and tittle. But, at the same time, be it remembered, that the admitted relaxation of law was such as was perfectly consistent with justice, such as was calculated to sustain the honor of the divine throne, and such as God might, consistently with his character, admit.

(3) Now, if it be admitted that God was at liberty either to accept or reject the substitute, it will follow that he was at liberty to prescribe the terms on which the substitute should be accepted. And, as God was under no obligations to accept a substitute at all, so he was under

no obligations to extend mercy to the sinner through the substitute. And as the efficacy of the substitute, as such, is based entirely on the will and appointment of God, even so the blessing of pardon and salvation through him is based entirely on the unmerited mercy and free grace of God, who has condescended freely to bring himself under obligations, by his own voluntary promise, to extend mercy to man through the Mediator. Hence it will follow that, as the admission of the substitute, and the promise of mercy through him, were acts of pure favor and free grace on the part of God, so, also, it must be the prerogative of God to fix, by his own will and appointment, not only the degree of suffering to be endured by the substitute, in order that the law may be "magnified and made honorable," and salvation be made possible to man, but also the condition upon which, and the plan according to which, pardon and salvation are to be extended.

(4) Therefore it is clear that the atonement of Christ, taken in the abstract, does not bring God under obligation to extend pardon and salvation, absolutely and unconditionally, to any. The obligations of God to pardon and save the sinner, upon any terms, result not necessarily from the atonement, as such, but from the gracious promise which God has been pleased freely to make. Now it will follow that, as God has not been pleased to promise that all for whom the atonement was made shall be immediately and unconditionally pardoned and released from the penalty of the law, there is no ground for cavil against the doctrine of atonement because all men in the present life suffer to some extent, and some in a future state shall suffer to the full extent, the penalty of the law.

Thus it is clear that the objection taken to the view of the atonement, from the admitted fact that all for whom it was made are not at once and forever released from the penalty of the law, falls to the ground.

The great truth is, that salvation, through the atonement, is not a system either of *prevention*, or of *absolute and immediate deliverance*, but of deliverance, *according to a prescribed plan*, which the Scriptures sufficiently unfold.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XVIII.

QUESTION 1. What is admitted in reference to the death of Christ, by Socinians, Arians, Unitarians, etc.?

2. What are the points in dispute contended for in this chapter?

3. What is the first argument presented to prove that Christ died *as a substitute?*

4. What are the scriptures adduced?

5. What is the proof from the use of the Greek preposition *anti?*

6. What is the first class of texts appealed to, to prove that the death of Christ was both *vicarious* and *expiatory?*

7. What are the scriptures adduced?

8. What passages speak of reconciliation, propitiation, etc., as connected with the death of Christ?

9. What passages speak of salvation under the appellation of *redemption?*

10. What passages connect justification, remission, sanctification, etc., with the death of Christ?

11. After man had sinned, what was the only way by which he could be released from the penalty?

12. How can it be shown that the sufferings of Christ in our room and stead meet the ends of divine government?

13. What are these ends?

14. What is said in reference to the exalted character of Christ?

15. In reference to the freeness with which he suffered?

16. In reference to the nature and extent of his sufferings?

17. What is the first objection mentioned to the view taken of the atonement?

18. How is it answered?

19. What is the second, and how is it answered?

20. What is the third, and how is it answered?

21. Is God under obligations to save the sinner on any terms?

22. Whence do those obligations originate?

23. Is salvation through the atonement a system of prevention?

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ATONEMENT—ITS EXTENT—VARIOUS THEORIES EXHIBITED.

A CONSIDERATION of the *extent* of the atonement, or an examination of the question, *For whom are the benefits of the death of Christ designed?* opens to our view one of the most interesting and important subjects connected with Christian theology.

From a very early period, upon this subject, the Church has been much divided in sentiment; and from the days of Calvin and Arminius to the present time, the great contending parties, in reference to the subject now before us, have been designated as Calvinists and Arminians.

Without, in this place, entering into consideration of the origin and history of the controversy here referred to, suffice it to say that the two great and learned men above named so systematized and arranged the peculiar views for which they contended, in reference to the extent of the atonement, and so impressed them with the indelible marks of their comprehensive and gigantic minds, that posterity, by common consent, have hitherto connected, and perhaps will still continue to connect, the names of Calvin and Arminius with the peculiar systems of doctrine for which they respectively contended.

When we reflect on the great number, extensive erudition, and eminent piety, of the divines who have been enrolled on either side in this controversy, we are at once admonished of the propriety of caution and calmness in the investigation of this subject, and of respectful forbearance of feeling toward those with whom we differ in judgment. Yet, at the same time, as this is a subject upon which the Bible is by no means silent, and one which must be decided by that book alone, and as it is made the duty of all to "search the Scriptures" for themselves, we may venture, in the fear of God, impartially to examine for ourselves, and to bring the points at issue to the test of reason and Scripture.

To enter minutely into the consideration of all the shades of difference in the sentiments, and technicalities of the arguments, which have been presented, by such as have been denominated Calvinists or Arminians, would be an interminable task. Upon no subject in divinity

has controversy been more voluminous, and it has seldom been more virulent, than too frequently it has been, in the discussion under consideration.

Before we enter particularly into the merits of the main question between Calvinists and Arminians, it may be proper briefly to advert to some of the views entertained by some who have properly belonged to neither of the two great divisions of Christians above named.

With regard to Arians, Socinians, Unitarians, etc., it may here be observed, that as they deny the proper divinity of Christ, without which he would be incapable of making an atonement, so they deny the native depravity of man, without which the atonement would not be necessary; and, in perfect consistency with these principles, they also deny the reality of the atonement itself, and consequently there is no place in their system for the application of its benefits.

There is, however, another scheme that we will here briefly notice, which, while it admits the native depravity of man, and the reality of the atonement through Christ, yet, so far as the application of the benefits of the atonement is concerned, it is essentially different both from Calvinism and Arminianism. We refer to a certain class of Universalists, who have so construed the extent of the atonement as thereby to secure absolute and unconditional salvation to all mankind. As the general system of Universalism will be a subject of special consideration in another place, a very brief reply to the particular feature of that system above named is all that we here deem necessary. The scheme itself is evidently based upon an erroneous view of the whole matter.

So to understand the atonement as thereby necessarily to secure the absolute and unconditional salvation of all mankind, would represent the work of redemption as a commercial transaction between the Father and the Son, by which the Son made a fair purchase of the human family, by paying down on the cross of Calvary an adequate price for the unconditional redemption of the whole world; and that, consequently, justice can never have any claim upon any to punish them hereafter. It is true, as hereafter may be more fully seen, that many Calvinists take the same view of the atonement, only that they limit it to the elect portion of the human family, and, so far as *they* are concerned, secure, by the death of Christ, their absolute and unconditional salvation, while the rest of mankind are "passed by," and left to perish in their sins, without the possibility of escape.

But the whole scheme, whether adopted by Universalists or Calvinists, we conceive to be based upon a false and unscriptural assumption. The Scriptures nowhere represent the atonement in the light of a

commercial transaction, but everywhere it is presented as a *governmental arrangement*. Were we to admit the premises, and take the view here presented of the nature of the atonement, then it would inevitably follow that all for whom the atonement was made would necessarily be saved; and the only controversy between Calvinists and Universalists would be, to determine whether the atonement was made for *all*, or only for *a part;* as both parties would be compelled to admit that all for whom Christ died to atone would most assuredly be saved.

That this commercial or credit-and-debtor view of the subject is erroneous and unscriptural, will be obvious when we reflect that it tends directly to banish from the scheme of redemption the whole system of grace. If the Saviour has purchased, by the payment of an equivalent, the salvation absolute of all for whom he died, then it follows that the Father is under obligations, in strict justice, to save them; consequently their salvation, so far as God the Father is concerned, cannot be of mercy or grace, but of debt; and the entire display of the divine benevolence, in the eternal salvation of sinners, is reduced to a fiction.

The truth is, the atonement, of itself, brings the Almighty under no obligations to extend salvation to the world. It is true, that without the atonement none could be saved; but *that* alone does not secure inevitably and necessarily the salvation of any. Salvation is emphatically of *grace*. The atonement removes the difficulties which stood in the way of man's salvation. These difficulties were, *a broken law*, and *the unsatisfied claims of divine justice*. While these barriers were in the way, God could not, however much he might have been disposed, consistently with his nature, extend mercy to man. The removal of these impediments—the magnifying of the broken law, and the satisfying of the demands of justice—was the great work of the atonement.

But the great difficulties which, without the atonement, rendered it impossible for God to extend mercy to man, being by the atonement removed, it does not necessarily follow that God is under obligations to extend mercy to man: it only follows that he *may*, if he *please*. And thus it appears that salvation is all of the free, unmerited grace of God. The atonement, considered in the abstract, leaves the Almighty free either to extend or withhold pardoning mercy; whereas, without the atonement, he was not free to extend mercy, but was bound to withhold it. All the obligations which God is under, even now, to save the sinner, flow not *necessarily from the atonement*, as a matter of debt, but from the *gracious promise of God*, which he has been pleased to make, through his mere mercy and benevolence. Hence we perceive that the

idea that God is under obligations to save all men, unconditionally, on account of the atonement of Christ, is so far from being correct, that he is, on that account, under no necessary obligations to save any.

And if the Almighty be free to extend or withhold mercy, according to his good pleasure, it necessarily follows that he has a right to fix the conditions of salvation as he may please. And as he has promised salvation to those who repent and believe, and threatened destruction to those who refuse, it is clear that there is no hope for such as reject the conditions of salvation as presented in the gospel, but they must perish everlastingly; and as we have clearly shown, the Universalist delusion must perish with them.

We will proceed to the consideration of the extent of the atonement, in which is involved the great matter of controversy between Calvinists and Arminians. We shall not attempt to amplify the subject, so as particularly to examine every thing which able divines have presented, either as illustration or argument, on either side. It shall be our main object to arrange and condense, so as to bring the essential point of inquiry to as narrow a compass as possible.

Notwithstanding Calvinists have differed with each other considerably in their manner of presenting this subject, yet we think this difference has generally consisted either in words, or in points not materially affecting the main question. There is *one great point* upon which every Calvinistic author of note, so far as we have been able to ascertain, has differed from all genuine Arminians. In that great and leading point is concentrated the substance of the whole controversy, and upon its settlement depends the adjustment of all questions of any real importance connected with the subject. The point referred to is embraced in the following question: *Does the atonement of Christ so extend to all men as to make salvation possible for them?* By all genuine Calvinists this question is answered in the negative; but by all genuine Arminians, it is answered in the affirmative.

I. Before we proceed directly to the discussion of the question here presented, we will notice *several different views of the subject, taken by learned and eminent Calvinists*, and show that they all perfectly harmonize when they come to the question above presented.

The following will be found to contain the substance of the principal Calvinistic theories upon this subject, viz.:

1. *That the atonement of Christ is specially limited, in its nature, design, and benefits, to the elect portion of mankind*, so that Christ died *for them alone; that he represented them alone in the covenant of redemption, and that "neither are any other redeemed by Christ."*

And that consequently none but the elect have any possible chance of salvation.

The foregoing is, no doubt, the strict Calvinistic view, as contained in the writings of Calvin himself, and set forth in the "Westminster Confession of Faith," which is at once the standard of the Church of Scotland and of the English and American Presbyterians. Yet it must be admitted that even the abettors of this system acknowledge that all men, by virtue of the atonement of Christ, are favored with temporal mercies, and what they term a "common call" of the gospel, which, however, they contend, cannot possibly lead to, nor are they designed to result in, their eternal salvation.

2. A second scheme is, *that the atonement of Christ possessed sufficient value in its nature to satisfy fully for all the sins of the whole world; but that it was not designed, nor can it possibly be extended in its application, so as to make salvation possible to any but the elect.*

It will be readily perceived that this scheme is not essentially variant from the first. Indeed, it has been advocated by a goodly number of the most eminent divines of the strictly Calvinistic Churches. The only point in which it might seem to differ from the first is, that it allows a sufficiency in the *nature* of the atonement to avail for the salvation of all; but that sufficiency in nature is completely neutralized by the declaration that, according to the intent and purpose of God, the *application* cannot possibly be made to any but the elect. This system is what has sometimes been termed *general redemption*, with a *particular application.* But to call this a scheme of *general redemption* is a palpable abuse of language; for if, according to the design and decree of God, it is absolutely impossible for any but the elect to obtain the benefits of the atonement, redemption, so far as the rest of mankind are concerned, is only in name, and amounts to a perfect nullity; so that there is no real difference between this and the first system.

3. A third system is, *that the atonement was not only sufficient, but was also designed for the salvation of all mankind;* and that the gospel should therefore be preached with sincerity alike to all; but that none but the elect can ever possibly be saved by it, because none others will believe and obey it; and that this is certain, because none can possibly believe unless God, by the invincible influence of his Spirit, give them faith, and this he has decreed from all eternity to withhold from all but the elect.

The substance of this system is this:—Christ has purchased a conditional salvation for all men. Faith is this condition; but, according to the decree and arrangement of God, this faith cannot possibly be obtained by any but the elect.

The above is substantially the scheme advocated by the pious Baxter, which he adopted from Camero, and introduced with the avowed purpose of steering a medium course between rigid Calvinism and Arminianism. It is, likewise, little different from the views advocated by Dr. Samuel Hopkins, and many other divines, of the last and the present century, both in Europe and America.

Calvinists of this class appear, to persons not well versed in the technicalities of their system, to exhibit the gospel call with as much unreserved fullness and freeness to all mankind as Arminians possibly can do. They offer salvation to all, urge all to repent and believe, and assure all that they have a sufficiency of grace to enable them to repent and believe, and that if they are not saved they will be condemned for their unbelief, and it will be their own fault. When their discourses are richly interlarded with such expressions as the above, it is not surprising that many should be unable to distinguish their doctrine from genuine Arminianism; but although they, no doubt, think they can, consistently with their creed, express themselves as they do, and should therefore be exonerated from any intention to mislead, yet it is most evident that, when we allow their own explanation to be placed upon their language, so far from harmonizing in sentiment with genuine Arminians, they differ in nothing essentially from rigid Calvinists of the Old School.

That we may understand correctly what they mean when they use such language as we have above quoted, it will be necessary for us to attend strictly to their own interpretation of the terms.

(1) Then, when they offer salvation indiscriminately to all, they sometimes tell us that they are justified in doing so, because the elect, who only have the power, in the proper sense, and who *only* are really intended to embrace it, are so mixed up among the general mass of all nations to whom the gospel is sent, that none but God can determine who they are; therefore the gospel call is general, and should be indiscriminately presented, that all for whose salvation it was really designed may embrace it, and that others may have the opportunity of willfully rejecting it, which they will most certainly do, because God has determined to withhold from them that *faith* without which the gospel cannot be properly received.

(2) When they urge all to repent and believe, they endeavor to justify themselves by alleging, that although man has lost the power to obey, God has not lost the right to command; that it is still the duty of all men to repent and believe the gospel; that salvation is sincerely offered to all upon these conditions; and that, if they do not comply

with the conditions, God is not to blame, for he is under obligations to confer saving faith upon none.

(3) When they say that all have a sufficiency of grace to enable them to repent and believe, and consequently to be saved, we must look narrowly at their own interpretation of the term *sufficiency*. When they use this word, and kindred terms, such as *power*, *ability*, etc., they do not attach to them their full import, according to their usual acceptation in language, but by resorting to the subtleties of philological distinction, and applying to these terms several different meanings, they fix upon a certain sense in which they think they can be used in reference to the salvation of all men. This sense, although it may be different from the generally received import of the terms, we may reasonably suppose is always present with their minds when they use the terms as above specified.

By the phrase "*sufficient grace*," as used by these divines, in reference to such as are not of the elect portion of mankind, we are not to understand invincible effectual grace, such as they affirm is given to the elect, but merely "sufficient ineffectual grace," as Baxter himself termed it. What he understood thereby, is sufficiently evident from his own words, as follows: "I say it again, confidently, all men that perish, (who have the use of reason,) do perish directly for rejecting sufficient recovering grace. By grace, I mean mercy contrary to merit. By recovering, I mean such as *tendeth* in its own nature toward their recovery, and leadeth, or helpeth, them thereto. By sufficient, I mean, *not sufficient directly to save them*, (for such none of the elect have till they are saved;) *nor yet sufficient to give them faith, or cause them savingly to believe.* But it is sufficient to bring them *nearer* Christ than they are, though not to put them into immediate possession of Christ by union with him, as faith would do." (Universal Redemption, p. 434.)

These words of Baxter may be considered a just comment on the language of all Calvinists, when they speak of a sufficiency of grace being given to all men. They mean a sufficiency to do them some good, "to bring them *nearer* Christ," and even a sufficiency to save them, if they would believe; but this they cannot do, because God withholds saving faith from them. It is difficult to understand the term "sufficient grace," as used above, to signify any thing different from *insufficient grace.* So far as the question of salvation is concerned, which is the only point of any importance herein involved, the term *sufficient* is entirely explained away, so as to be made a perfect nullity. And thus this system is left, notwithstanding it professes to give a sufficiency of grace to all mankind, in no essential point different from rigid Calvinism.

(4) Again: when Calvinists present the offer of salvation to all, and declare that God willeth not the damnation of any, in order to reconcile these terms, which seem to imply a real provision and possibility for the salvation of all, with the true principles of their creed, they resort to a distinction between what they term the *revealed* and *secret* will of God. It is, say they, according to the revealed will of God that all men should repent and believe, and consequently be saved; but it is according to the secret will of God that none shall receive the grace to enable them to repent and believe, but the elect; and consequently that salvation is, in the proper sense, *possible to none others.*

As a farther illustration, and as an evidence that we have not here misinterpreted the true sentiments of Calvinists, we present the following quotation from a late Calvinistic author of great learning and eminence:

"The Calvinists say that these counsels and commands, which are intended by God to produce their full effect only with regard to the elect, are addressed indifferently to all for this reason: because it was not revealed to the writers of the New Testament, nor is it now revealed to the ministers of the gospel, who the elect are. The Lord knoweth them that are his; but he hath not given this knowledge to any of the children of men. We are not warranted to infer from the former sins of any person that he shall not, at some future period, be conducted by the grace of God to repentance; and therefore we are not warranted to infer that the counsels and exhortations of the divine word, which are some of the instruments of the grace of God, shall finally prove vain with regard to any individual. But although it is in this way impossible for a discrimination to be made in the manner of publishing the gospel, and although many may receive the calls and commands of the gospel who are not in the end to be saved, the Calvinists do not admit that even with regard to them these calls and commands are wholly without effect. For they say that the publication of the gospel is attended with real benefit even to those who are not elected. It points out to them their duty; it restrains them from flagrant transgressions, which would be productive of much present inconvenience, and would aggravate their future condemnation; it has contributed to the diffusion and enlargement of moral and religious knowledge, to the refinement of manners, and to the general welfare of society. And it exhibits such a view of the condition of man, and of the grace from which the remedy proceeds, as magnifies both the righteousness and the compassion of the Supreme Ruler, and leaves without excuse those who continue in sin.

"The Calvinists say farther, that although these general uses of the publication of the gospel come very far short of that saving benefit which is confined to the elect, there is no want of meaning or of sincerity in the expostulations of Scripture, or in its reproaches and pathetic expressions of regret with regard to those who do not obey the counsels and commands that are addressed to all. For these counsels and commands declare what is the duty of all, what they feel they ought to perform, what is essential to their present and their future happiness, and what no physical necessity prevents them from doing. There is, indeed, a moral inability—a defect—in their will. But the very object of counsels and commands is to remove this defect; and if such a defect rendered it improper for the Supreme Ruler to issue commands, every sin would carry with it its own excuse, and the creatures of God might always plead that they were absolved from the obligation of his law, because they were indisposed to obey it. It is admitted by the Calvinists that the moral inability in those who are not elected is of such a kind as will infallibly prevent their obeying the commands of God; and it is a part of their system that the Being who issues these commands has resolved to withhold from such persons the grace which alone is sufficient to remove that inability. In accounting for these commands, therefore, they are obliged to have recourse to a distinction between the secret and the revealed will of God. They understand by his revealed will that which is preceptive, which declares the duty of his creatures, containing commands agreeable to the sentiments of their minds and the constitution of their nature, and delivering promises which shall certainly be fulfilled to all who obey the commands. They understand by his secret will, his own purpose in distributing his favors and arranging the condition of his creatures—a purpose which is founded upon the wisest reasons, and is infallibly carried into execution by his sovereign power, but which, not being made known to his creatures, cannot possibly be the rule of their conduct." (Hill's Lectures.)

There is, perhaps, only a *shade* of difference between the theory of Baxter and Hopkins, as above delineated, which has been held by a large portion of the Calvinistic Churches since their day, and the more modern phase of the subject called "New Divinity," and advocated generally by New School Presbyterians, and the Congregationalists of New England. We must, however, reserve the examination of this subject for our next chapter.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XIX.

QUESTION 1. Has there been much diversity of sentiment in the Church relative to the *extent* of the atonement?

2. Into what two great parties have Christians been divided on this subject?

3. Why should caution and forbearance be exercised on this subject?

4. Has this controversy always been conducted in a proper spirit?

5 What is the view of Arians, Socinians, etc., in reference to the extent of the atonement?

6. What peculiar view is taken by a certain class of Universalists?

7 Upon what false assumption is this scheme based?

8. Has the same view of the nature of atonement been adopted by any others?

9. Do the Scriptures present the atonement in the light of a commercial transaction?

10. In what light, then?

11. To admit this view of the nature of atonement, would the salvation of all for whom it was made necessarily follow?

12. What, then, would be the controversy between Calvinists and Universalists?

13. How is this scheme refuted?

14. In what great question is embraced the substance of the controversy between Calvinists and Arminians?

15. What are the three different views taken by Calvinists on this subject?

16. Is there any essential difference in these schemes on the subject of the main question?

17. What distinguished divines are mentioned as having advocated the latter?

18. How have Calvinists endeavored to justify themselves in offering salvation to all?

19. Have they in this way successfully vindicated their consistency?

20. What does Mr. Baxter mean by the phrase "sufficient grace"?

21. What does Dr. Hill mean by *moral inability*, and by the *revealed* and the *secret* will of God?

CHAPTER XX.

THE ATONEMENT—ITS EXTENT—MORE MODERN PHASES OF CALVINISM EXAMINED.

In the controversy which, for a century past, has been conducted with so much zeal between Calvinism and Arminianism, it cannot be denied that the advocates of Calvinism have greatly changed their form of presenting, and their method of defending, that system. The phase of Calvinism, as generally set forth in this country at the present day, is materially modified from what it was half a century ago. An exemplification of this fact is, perhaps, nowhere more clearly witnessed than in connection with the New School Presbyterians. Indeed, it was the introduction of a new method of setting forth the Calvinistic doctrines which mainly contributed to the division of the Presbyterian Church in the United States into the New and the Old School branches.

In our preceding chapter, we think we have clearly shown that Calvinism, in all its different phases, and in all its various costumes, in the same Churches at different times, and in different Churches at all times, has ever been, and still continues to be, essentially the same: the changes having been merely modal, its identity essential. We have, however, deemed it proper to devote a brief chapter to the consideration of that system, as presented generally in the present day, and especially by the New School Presbyterians, and the New England Congregationalists.

I. *We will first explain this "new divinity," as it pertains to the essential feature in question.*

We choose to do this by a few citations from some reputable authors.

The Rev. Albert Barnes, an accredited exponent of the doctrine in question, in his sermon entiled "The Way of Salvation," expresses himself thus: "This atonement was for all men. It was an offering made for the race. It had not respect so much to *individuals*, as to the *law* and *perfections* of God. It was an opening of the way for pardon —a making forgiveness consistent—a preserving of truth—a magnifying of the law; and had no particular reference to any class of men We judge that he died for all. He tasted death for every man. He

is the propitiation for the sins of the world. He came, that whosoever would believe on him should not perish, but have eternal life. The full benefit of this atonement is offered to all men. In perfect sincerity God makes the offer. He has commissioned his servants to go and preach the gospel—that is, the good news that salvation is provided for them—to every creature. He that does not this—that goes to offer the gospel to a part only, to elect persons only, or that supposes that God offers the gospel only to a portion of mankind—violates his commission, practically charges God with insincerity, makes himself 'wise above what is written,' and brings great reproach on the holy cause of redemption. The offer of salvation is not made by *man*, but by *God*. It is his commission; and it is his solemn charge that the sincere offer of heaven should be made to every creature. I stand as the messenger of God, with the assurance that all that *will* may be saved; that the atonement was full and free; and that, if any perish, it will be because they choose to die, and not because they are straitened in God. I have no fellow-feeling for any other gospel: I have no right-hand of fellowship to extend to any scheme that does not say that God sincerely offers all the bliss of heaven to every guilty, wandering child of Adam."

From this extract, who would suppose that its author was not an Arminian of the boldest type? Here is exhibited a general, a *universal*, atonement for every child of Adam—a provision, rich, full, and free, to be sincerely tendered to *all mankind*. Is not this real Wesleyan Arminianism? Such, truly, it seems! But, strange to think! the author is still a Calvinist. Subscribing to the "Westminster Confession of Faith," he still holds to predestination, the eternal decrees, foreordination, effectual calling, in the strict, unconditional sense. When he exclaimed, "I stand as the messenger of God, with the assurance that all that *will* may be saved," he inserted the little emphatic word "*will*," which still enables him to moor his bark in the Calvinistic harbor.

It is the theory of Mr. Barnes, and of the New School Calvinists generally, that Christ died for *all;* that the atonement is ample for *all;* that God invites *all;* that God wills that *all* should come to Christ and be saved. They proclaim these Bible truths with impassioned earnestness, so that one could hardly suppose it possible that they did not believe that God had provided a *possible* salvation alike for all men. But yet, their theory admits no such thing. They hold that while the atonement is ample to save all, *if* they would but accept it, that yet, such is the native depravity of the human heart, that no man *will*, or *can*, accept of the salvation offered, unless God first, by invincible sov-

ereign grace, imparts the *will* to repent, believe, and obey the gospel; and they farther hold, as strictly as do Calvinists of the Old School, that God has determined from all eternity to impart this sovereign converting grace only to the elect of God embraced in the covenant of redemption. They farther admit that these elect of God, until God visits them with his invincible converting grace, are quite as wicked, and as averse to the exercise of true repentance and faith, as the rest of mankind vhom God sees fit to "pass by," and leave to perish for their sins.

Yet they still contend strenuously, that if men perish, it is altogether their own fault; and that God in perfect sincerity makes the offer of salvation to all men alike. But how do they reconcile all this with the doctrine of the "Confession of Faith" to which they all subscribe? This is the point now to be examined.

Calvinists of this class play upon the word *will*, telling us that all the inability of the reprobate sinner to come to Christ results from his own perverse *will;* that he *might* be saved *if he would*, but as he freely *wills* to reject Christ, he is justly accountable for his unbelief and sin, though they can show us no way, according to their theory, by which this unbelief and sin, for which they are held responsible, may be removed, or overcome. When they speak of the *ability* of all men to believe and be saved, they understand by the term *ability* something far short of the full import of that word as commonly used. They resort to the subtlety of philosophy, and make a distinction between *natural* and *moral* ability. By the former, they mean the *physical powers* necessary to the performance of any specific act; by the latter, they mean the *mental state*, or *condition of the will or heart*, necessary to the performance of the act in question. Hence, when they say that all men may believe and be saved, they only mean that they have the *natural powers* necessary to saving faith; but that those natural powers must necessarily be unavailing in all except the elect, because they cannot be exerted without the *moral ability*, which none can possess unless God see proper, by his invincible sovereign grace, to confer it. But as he has decreed from all eternity to withhold this grace from all except the elect, it is certain, according to this theory, that none others *will*, or *can*, be saved.

To show that we do not misstate their views in reference to *natural* and *moral* ability, we make a few quotations from their own writers.

Dr. John Smalley says: "*Moral inability* consists only in the want of heart, or disposition, or will, to do a thing. *Natural inability*, on the other hand, consists in, or arises from, want of understanding, bodily strength, opportunity, or whatever may prevent our doing a thing when we are willing, and strongly enough disposed or inclined, to do it."

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Andrew Fuller says: "We suppose that the propensities of mankind to evil are so strong as to become invincible to every thing but omnipotent grace. . . . It is *natural* power, and that only, that is properly so called, and which is necessary to render men accountable beings."

In the Princeton Review, (April, 1854, page 246,) *moral inability* is defined as "a rooted propensity to evil, and aversion to good; a moral bias, which man has not the requisite power to remove."

Mr. Barnes, in the sermon from which we have quoted, in speaking of *natural ability*, says: "It is not to any want of physical strength that this rejection is owing, for men have power enough in themselves to *hate* both God and their fellow-men: it requires *less* physical power to *love* God than to *hate* him." Here the position assumed by Mr. Barnes is, that because men have the requisite "*physical power*" to "love God," therefore they are responsible for rejecting Christ; although, according to his own theory, they are by nature involved in a *moral inability* which must forever neutralize that "physical power." We might multiply quotations from Calvinistic writers, both Old and New School, on this point, but we have said enough to evince clearly what they mean by their distinction between *natural* and *moral* ability, and that they ground human responsibility *solely on natural ability.*

We, however, with special reference to New School divinity, present a few additional remarks.

The following propositions, which we quote from the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, were subscribed to by a number of the New School divines, for the express purpose of demonstrating that their theory of Calvinism was consistent with the "Confession of Faith."

1. "While sinners have all the faculties necessary to a perfect moral agency and a just accountability, such is their love of sin and opposition to God and his law, that, *independently of the renewing influence or almighty energy of the Holy Spirit, they never will comply with the commands of God.*" (April No., 1863, page 585.)

2. "While repentance for sin and faith in Christ are indispensable to salvation, *all who are saved are indebted from first to last to the grace and Spirit of God.* And the reason that God does not save all, is not that he lacks the power to do it, but that *in his wisdom he does not see fit to exert that power farther than he actually does.*" (July No., 1863, page 585.)

3 "While the liberty of the will is not impaired, nor the established connection between means and end broken by any action of God on the mind, he can influence it according to his pleasure, and *does effectually determine it to good in all cases of true conversion.*" (July No., 1863, page 586.)

4. "While all such as reject the gospel of Christ, do it not by coercion, but freely, and all who embrace it, do it not by coercion, but freely, *the reason why some differ from others is, that God has made them to differ.*" (July No., 1863, page 586.)

It is not to our purpose to inquire into all the shades of difference in opinion between New and Old School Calvinists. We have numbered the foregoing propositions, and have italicized parts of them, for our own convenience in commenting upon them. In general terms, we remark that they are so ingeniously framed, that while the superficial examiner might construe them as favoring Arminianism, yet, upon closer scrutiny, it may be clearly seen that they are so worded as to admit of being dove-tailed into old-fashioned Calvinism, as homogeneous to the same system.

In No. 1, the "*almighty energy* of the Holy Spirit" is referred to, without which the sinner "*never will* comply with the commands of God." This means, in Old School dialect, the "effectual call"—the "secret, invincible, regenerating grace"—without which none can *will* to come to Christ. None without this grace can be saved; consequently the salvation of those from whom this grace is withheld, is *beyond the range of possibility.*

In No. 2, the Calvinistic dogma that the sinner *can do nothing* toward his salvation, but that he is as passive and helpless in the case as the clay in the hand of the potter, is fully implied in the terms, "are indebted from first to last to the grace and Spirit of God"—that is, repentance and faith on the part of the sinner have nothing to do with his salvation, whether as *conditions* or otherwise. And more plainly still, we are here taught that the *reason why all are not saved* is this: God "in his wisdom does not see fit to exert that (his saving) power any farther in that way"—that is, the reason of their not being saved is altogether with God; it results solely from *his sovereign will.*

In No. 3, the "invincible sovereign grace which God sees fit to bestow upon the *elect*, but to withhold from all others," is clearly secured. God can "influence" the *will* "according to his pleasure, and does *effectually determine it to good:*" this is only the "invincible grace" of "effectual calling," with the phraseology slightly modified. The language is changed—the sense is identical with Old Calvinism.

In No. 4, the entire question of salvation or damnation is removed from the door of the sinner, and devolved solely upon God. If men "differ" in moral or religious character, it is because "*God has made them to differ.*" The sinner is not the custodian of his own moral character. If one is *good*, and another *bad*—if one is a *believer*, and the

other an *infidel*—we are taught that "the reason why is, that *God has made them to differ.*"

It is plain, from the quotations given, that the New School as well as the Old hold that none ever *will*, or, in the proper sense of the word, *can*, be saved, except God, by the exertion of his power, in a manner in which he does not see fit to exert it upon others, *makes them willing to repent and believe, thus making them to differ from others.* Hence, according to this theory, as God has determined not to exert this power on any but the "elect," and as none *can be saved* without it, it follows that salvation is not made possible for all men.

II. *We now proceed to show that their whole theory, with their distinctions about natural and moral ability and inability, is erroneous—inconsistent with the philosophy of language, and the nature of things.*

The terms, *natural* and *moral ability*, have evidently been coined and pressed into this discussion by Calvinists to answer a purpose. They are used in a variety of acceptations—some proper, and some improper. Often they are ambiguous—convenient handmaids of sophistry, serving to obscure the truth, or to make error pass for truth. They are, as used in theology, an outbirth of Augustinian predestination—a material out of which has been woven a fabric to cover up some of the most rugged and distasteful features of Calvinism.

Allowed to occupy their proper place, *natural* and *moral* are adjectives of very plain import. *Natural*, says Webster, means "pertaining to nature; produced or effected by nature, or by the laws of growth, formation, or motion, impressed on bodies or beings by divine power." *Moral*, says Webster, "denotes something which respects the conduct of men—something which respects the intellectual powers of man, as distinct from his physical powers." Webster defines *ability* to mean "*power*," whether *physical*, *intellectual*, or of whatever kind.

Hence it is easy to understand these terms in their proper literal import. To have *ability* for any thing, is to possess all the power requisite for it. Ability to *do* any thing, implies all the power necessary to the performance of the act. If several powers are necessary to the performance of a specific act—if it can only be performed by the possession of *all those powers*—we cannot have *ability* for it while we lack *any one* of those powers.

The distinction made by Calvinistic divines between *natural* and *moral* ability, is not only at war with the philosophy of language, but with the nature of things. Agreeably to Webster, or any good lexicographer, the *moral* powers (so called) are as *natural* as the *physical*. Is not the intellect, the will, or the moral sense, as *natural*—as much an

element of our constitution—as our physical powers? Are not the *moral* powers really only one phase or species of the *natural?* In a word, is not the *moral ability* of these divines as much *natural* as their *natural ability?* And if so, is not the dividing of ability into *natural* and *moral*, manifestly inaccurate?

"The will," says Dr. Whedon, (see Whedon on the "Freedom of the Will,") "is as natural a power as the intellect or the corporeal strength The volitions are as truly natural as any bodily act. The will is a natural part of the human soul. The ability or inability of the will is a natural ability or inability. There is no faculty more natural than the will, or that stands above it, or antithetical to it, as more eminently natural. On the other hand, to make moral volitional is absurd; for many acts of the *will* belong not to the sphere of morals. They are not moral or ethical acts, and therefore they exert no moral ability; and so, again, the power to will is not a moral, but a natural, ability."

The same author continues: "This misuse of terms infringes upon and tends to supplant their legitimate application to their proper significates. There is a proper natural ability, moral ability, and *gracious ability*, to which these terms should be exclusively applied.

"Natural ability, or abilities, include all the abilities or powers with which a man is born, or into which he grows. Natural is hereby often antithetical to acquired. The term ability includes capabilities of body or mind; of mind, including intellect, will, or moral sense.

"*Moral ability*, being a species under natural ability, is every power of the body or mind viewed as capable of being exerted for a moral or immoral purpose.

"*Gracious ability* is an ability, whether of body or soul, conferred by divine goodness over and above the abilities possessed by man by nature —that is, as a born and growing creature."

The purpose for which the Calvinistic thesis respecting natural and moral ability was invented, was to find a plausible ground of human responsibility, consistently with the tenets of Calvinism. In addition to the abuse of terms which, as we have shown, the scheme involves, we now proceed to show that—

III. *The scheme itself is not only absurd and self-contradictory, but that it fails to furnish any rational ground of human responsibility; and, consequently, does not essentially differ from the doctrine of the Old School, on the main question between them and Arminians.*

1. The gist of the whole thesis about natural and moral ability with these divines, whether they rank as New or Old School, is, that they assume that man has *natural ability* to embrace salvation, and that this

alone furnishes ample ground of responsibility. The fallacy lies in this: they assume that because a man possesses *a kind* of ability, therefore he is responsible for not performing a certain duty, which can only be performed by the exercise of *another kind* of ability which he does not possess—that is, because we have a *natural* ability, we are responsible for not doing what it is impossible for us to do without a *moral* ability.

Now, we demand, is it not clear that if responsibility connects with *power* to do what is required at all, it must be an *adequate power?* Mr. Barnes endeavors to show that, because a man has "physical strength," he is responsible for not receiving Christ into his heart. The power to perform any given act amounts to nothing, unless it can avail in reference to that act. Unless it can do *this*, it is *no power* at all in the case. Because a child has power to read a verse in his English Testament, will you chastise him for not reading it in the Greek, of which he is perfectly ignorant? No man *can* receive salvation by the exercise of mere *natural ability*, any more than he can create a world. How, then, can he be justly responsible for not accepting salvation, merely because of his natural ability? Must the sinner be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" for not obeying the gospel, merely because he had *natural ability*, though he had not *moral ability*, without which he could no more obey the gospel than he could stop the course of nature?

2. But again, this scheme is as self-contradictory as it is absurd. Ability to do any particular thing, means all the power essential to the performance of that thing. Hence, if I have a natural ability to accept salvation, I must also have moral ability. If natural ability does not include all the ability essential to the act in question, it is *no ability;* for ability for any thing includes all the power essential to its performance.

In the nature of things, I can have no natural ability to do any thing, unless I first have the moral ability. Moral ability implies the *will*—the *state* or *disposition* of the heart. Now, how can I get up and walk, unless I am *willing* to do so? I must first have the *will* before I *can* perform any act of duty whatever—that is, I must first have the *moral* before I *can* have the *natural* ability for it. If I lack the *moral* ability to come to Christ for salvation, I can have *no ability* whatever for that duty. *Natural ability* in the case is an absurdity. I can have no *natural* ability in opposition to, or in the absence of, moral ability. Hence, to found human responsibility upon *natural*, in the absence of *moral*, ability, is to found it upon a *nullity*—upon *no ability*—upon an *impossibility*.

Dr. Whedon pertinently remarks: "Where there is no *moral ability*, there can be no *natural ability*. Where there is no power to will, there is no power to execute the behest of the will. That behest cannot be obeyed if it cannot exist. If there be no adequate power for the given volition, there is no volition to obey, and so no power to obey. An impossible volition cannot be fulfilled. If a man through counter motive force has no power to *will* otherwise than sin, he has no sequent power to *do* otherwise than sin. If a man has not the power to will right, he has not the power to act right. An agent can perform a bodily act only through his will. And as it is a universal law that no agent can *do* what he cannot *will*, so it is a universal truth, that where there is no power of will, there is no bodily power to fulfill the volition which cannot exist. What a man cannot *will*, that he cannot *do*—that is, where there is no *moral ability*, there can be no *natural ability*. Hence it is helplessly absurd to propose 'natural ability,' in the absence of 'moral ability,' as a ground of responsibility."

3. But again, there is another kind of ability of vastly more consequence than either *natural* or *moral* ability. We mean *gracious ability*. To speak of responsibility in reference to salvation being founded on natural or moral ability, or both of them together, is to ignore the express teachings of the Saviour, who says: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light." Responsibility, it is true, depends to some extent on all these powers—physical, intellectual, and volitional—so far as they can aid us in the service of God; but all *these* powers together cannot make up that ability, out of the use or abuse of which our responsibility mainly arises. The salvation or destruction of the soul turns solely upon the use or abuse of that *gracious ability* which God, through the atonement of Christ and the influence of the Holy Spirit, imparts to every sinner. Here is the ground of that responsibility which all must meet in the final judgment. If *there* condemned, it will be because we rejected offered mercy, refusing to use the *gracious ability* furnished us by the gospel. If saved, it will be because we accepted that *gracious ability* so freely provided. In connection with the eternal destiny of the soul, all other ability, if it includes not *this*, is light as a feather. No other ability—call it natural, moral, or by what name we please—can enable us to believe and be saved, or to reject Christ and perish.

4. But we now inquire, *Does this New School theory harmonize with that of the Old School, in reference to the great essential question between Calvinists and Arminians?* Or does it poise itself upon the Arminian platform, and teach a *possible salvation* for all men? We think it only

necessary to scrutinize this theory closely, to perceive that it escapes none of those serious objections which have been urged against rigid Calvinism. It is liable to all those absurd and revolting consequences.

(1) *In reference to the eternal destiny of the soul, it devolves the responsibility, not upon the sinner, but upon God.*

The doctrine set forth by the theory teaches, that while the atonement is ample for *all*, intended for *all*, and the gospel should be preached alike to *all*, and the invitation to repent, believe, and be saved, should be sincerely addressed to *all*, that yet, such is the native depravity and moral inability of all sinners, that no one of the race will ever repent and believe, if left to himself, and to the common influences of the gospel and the Spirit. It farther teaches that God, looking upon all men as alike utterly sinful and helpless, sees proper to extend to a part (the elect) a secret invincible influence, making them *willing* and *able* (imparting the indispensable moral ability) to accept of salvation; and that the impartation of this influence absolutely secures the salvation of all to whom it is given; and that if this influence were in the same way extended to *all*, *all* would be saved.

Now, we demand, of what avail can it be to the sinner to be told that Christ died to save him; that atoning mercy, ample, rich, and free, is provided for him, and that he may come to Christ and be saved, *if he will*, when he is assured that he is possessed of an inherited nature so corrupt and obdurate that none possessed of that nature ever did, or ever will, come to Christ, till God sees proper to impart the secret invincible influence of his Spirit, and thereby regenerate that nature? If the nature of all men is alike depraved, and if God imparts to a portion, who are no better than the rest, this influence, which, if imparted alike to all, would save all, but withholds it from others, then are not "the ways of God" *unequal?* Is not God a "respecter of persons"?

If it is certain that the sinner never will, nor can, be saved without this secret influence, which God of his own sovereign pleasure withholds, then where rests the responsibility? Whose fault, whose doing is it that the sinner is not saved? He inherits this moral inability which is certain, while it remains, to keep him from Christ. Can he be responsible for the nature with which he was born? Or how can he change this nature? He has natural ability, it is allowed. But is *this* adequate to the work? Can the native powers of this fallen body and depraved soul overcome this moral inability—this perverseness of will—which cleaves to the native moral constitution, like "the skin to the

Ethiopian, or the spots to the leopard"? And while this *moral inability* remains, the sinner can no more come to Christ than he can dethrone Omnipotence. If this moral inability can only be overcome in the heart of the sinner by a secret invincible influence (the effectual call) which God has determined to withhold, then may the preacher as well waste his sermons and his exhortations upon the insensate rocks as upon him! It affords no palliation to tell him he may come to Christ if he *will*. The question is, *How can he get the will?* Can *he* change that corrupt nature, one of whose essential attributes excludes that will?

If we admit that God imparts to the sinner a *gracious ability* by which this corrupt nature may be restrained, and this moral inability so counteracted as to enable the sinner to come to Christ—if we take this position, then the difficulty all vanishes. But by so doing, we step fairly upon the Arminian ground, and the last plank of the Calvinistic platform has been deserted. Here is the dividing line between these two renowned systems of theology. If God has provided a *gracious ability* for every sinner, by which this soul-destroying *moral inability* may be counteracted, and the sinner saved, then is Arminianism true: the responsibility is thrown upon the sinner, and "the ways of God are justified to men." But if we reject this position, then do we hitch on to the system of Calvinism; and we must embrace it in all its essential features, however rugged and revolting they may appear, or involve ourselves at every step in palpable inconsistency and self-contradiction.

(2) Again: if, as the theory teaches, God gives to a part the moral ability to come to Christ, and withholds it from the rest, when all are alike depraved and helpless, does not this prove that God *primarily wills* the destruction of those that are lost—preferring their destruction to their salvation? All must admit that God *could*, were he so disposed, just as easily impart this secret invincible grace to *all* as to *a part*. It will be admitted also, that if God would but impart this grace alike to *all*, then *all* would infallibly be saved. Now we ask, according to this theory, *Why* is not the sinner saved? The answer must be, because God primarily wills that he should be lost. He wills to withhold that grace, without which he cannot be saved, and with which he infallibly would be saved; consequently he wills that the sinner should be lost. And thus it is clear that this theory destroys the proper ground of human responsibility, taking it from the sinner, and throwing it back on the primary will of God. Hence, by clear logical sequence, this theory is liable to all the objectionable features of rigid

Calvinism. It denies that the atonement provides *a possible salvation for all men.*

(3) If the ground be taken, as has been done by some claiming to be Calvinists, that the sinner may, by the exercise of his mere native powers, change his "purpose," or his "preference," and thus, on the principle of self-conversion, come to Christ, repent, believe, and be saved, independent of this secret invincible grace—(the effectual call)—if any choose to occupy this position, then they are neither Calvinists nor Arminians, but have rushed to the extreme of Pelagianism. For the refutation of their theory, we refer to the appropriate department in this work.

We think it must now be clearly apparent that, however much Calvinists may vary on points of little or no importance, yet, when they come to the main question involved in their controversy with Arminians, they perfectly harmonize.

It is only necessary for us particularly to inquire for the sense in which they use scholastic and technical terms, and we may readily see that, however diversified the course of illustration and reasoning which they pursue, they arrive at the same ultimate conclusion. Whether they speak of a universal or limited atonement; whether they present the offer of gospel grace in terms the most general and unlimited, or with marked restriction and reservation; whether they be supralapsarian or sublapsarian in their peculiar views of the covenant of redemption; whether they be ranked with Antinomians or moderate Calvinists; whether they be designated as Baxterians or Hopkinsians, as New or Old School; whether they dwell mostly on free agency and sufficient grace, or on divine sovereignty and philosophic necessity; or in whatever else they may differ, they arrive at the same ultimate conclusion on the great question we have proposed, as containing the gist of the controversy between Calvinists and Arminians. They do not believe that *the atonement of Christ so extends to all men as to make salvation possible for them.*

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XX.

QUESTION 1. Where do we witness the most striking development of the new phases of Calvinism?

2. What is the purport of the quotation from Mr. Barnes?

3. How do Calvinists attempt to reconcile the universal offer of salvation with their theory?

4 How do they explain *natural* and *moral* ability?

5. How may it be shown that their definitions on the subject are erroneous?

6 What three kinds of ability are presented, and how is each defined?

7. In what may be summed up the gist of the Calvinistic theses on the subject?

8. With what kind of power is responsibility connected?

9. How is the theory of Calvinists on the subject of ability shown to be absurd and self-contradictory?

10. Upon what kind of ability is human responsibility properly founded?

11. Wherein do the New and the Old School theories harmonize?

12. How is it shown that the New School theory escapes none of the most revolting consequences of rigid Calvinism?

CHAPTER XXI.

THE ATONEMENT—ITS EXTENT—THE ARMINIAN VIEW EXHIBITED AND PROVED BY SCRIPTURE.

HAVING, in the preceding chapters, presented the true attitude of Calvinists in regard to the main point at issue, and shown their essential agreement, we proceed briefly to define the genuine Arminian ground with regard to the same leading question. Preparatory to this, however, we first present a brief account of that system of Christian doctrine denominated Arminianism.

"Arminianism, strictly speaking, is that system of religious doctrine which was taught by Arminius, professor of divinity in the University of Leyden. If, therefore, we would learn precisely what Arminianism is, we must have recourse to those writings in which that divine himself has stated and expounded his peculiar tenets. This, however, will by no means give us an accurate idea of that which, since his time, has been usually denominated Arminianism. On examination, it will be found that, in many important particulars, those who have called themselves Arminians, or have been accounted such by others, differ as widely from the nominal head and founder of their sect, as he himself did from Calvin and other doctors of Geneva.

"The tenets of the Arminians may be comprised in the following five articles, relating to predestination, universal redemption, the corruption of men, conversion, and perseverance, viz.:

"1. That God from all eternity determined to bestow salvation on those whom he foresaw would persevere unto the end in their faith in Christ Jesus; and to inflict everlasting punishment on those who should continue in their unbelief, and resist unto the end his divine succors; so that election was conditional, and reprobation in like manner the result of foreseen infidelity and persevering wickedness.

"2. That Jesus Christ, by his sufferings and death, made an atonement for the sins of all mankind in general, and of every individual in particular; that, however, none but those who believe in him can be partakers of the divine benefits.

"3. That true faith cannot proceed from the exercise of our natural

faculties and powers, nor from the force and operation of free will; since man, in consequence of his natural corruption, is incapable either of thinking or doing any good thing; and that therefore it is necessary, in order to his salvation, that he be regenerated and renewed by the operation of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ.

"4. That this divine grace or energy of the Holy Ghost begins and perfects every thing that can be called good in man, and consequently all good works are to be attributed to God alone; that, nevertheless, this grace is offered to all, and does not force men to act against their inclinations, but may be resisted and rendered ineffectual by the perverse wills of impenitent sinners.

"5. That God gives to the truly faithful, who are regenerated by his grace, the means of preserving themselves in this state; and though the first Arminians made some doubt with respect to the closing part of this article, their followers uniformly maintain that the regenerate may lose true justifying faith, forfeit their state of grace, and die in their sins." (Watson's Biblical and Theological Dictionary.)

From the foregoing account of the general principles of Arminianism, we conclude, in reference to the great question which we have proposed, that all genuine Arminians agree—

1. That, notwithstanding the atonement has been made, those to whom the gospel is addressed cannot be saved without faith in Christ.

2. That mankind, by the exercise of their own natural powers, are incapable of believing in Christ unto salvation, without the supernatural influence of divine grace through the Holy Spirit.

3. That the assisting grace of God is, through the atonement, so extended to every man as to enable him to partake of salvation.

Thus it may be seen, that while the Arminians discard the merit of works, or the ability to save themselves, yet they all agree in believing that the atonement of Christ *so extends to all men as to make salvation possible for them.*

As we have now shown that all genuine Calvinists and Arminians are fairly at issue with regard to the *extent of the atonement* so as to make salvation possible to all men, and as the substance of the entire controversy between them is plainly involved in that single question, we are now prepared to appeal "to the law and to the testimony." On a subject of so great importance, we can confidently rely on nothing short of "Thus saith the Lord." And happy for the honest inquirer after truth, upon no subject is the holy volume more copious and explicit.

We trust that no unfairness has been exercised in the exhibit which we have made of the peculiar views of Calvinists and Arminians, and that we may now impartially examine the question.

We proceed, then, to the discussion of the following question: *Does the atonement of Christ so extend to all mankind as to make salvation possible for them?* Upon this question we endeavored to show that all genuine Calvinists assume the *negative*, and all genuine Arminians the *affirmative*.

That the *affirmative* is the real doctrine of Scripture, we shall now endeavor to prove.

I. Our first argument on this subject is founded upon those passages of Scripture in which, in speaking of the death or the atonement of Christ, *terms of universality are used*, such as, "*the world*," "*the whole world*," "*all men*," etc.

This class of texts is so numerous, that we need only select a few of many. John i. 29: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of *the world*." John iii. 16, 17: "For God so loved *the world* that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into *the world* to condemn *the world*, but that *the world* through him might be saved." John iv. 42: "This is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of *the world*." John vi. 51: "And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of *the world*." 2 Cor. v. 14: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for *all*, then were *all* dead." Heb. ii. 9: "That he by the grace of God should taste death for *every man*." 1 John ii. 2: "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of *the whole world*." 1 Tim. iv. 10: "Who is the Saviour of *all men*, especially of those that believe." 2 Cor. v. 19: "God was in Christ, reconciling *the world* unto himself." 1 Tim. ii. 6: "Who gave himself a ransom *for all*, to be testified in due time."

It has already been shown, in the discussion of the *nature* of the atonement, what is implied in Christ's dying "for us," or "for the world." With Calvinists, at least, there can be no evasion on this point; for none have more successfully than they, when contending against the Socinians, demonstrated that the phrase "to die for," as used in application to the death of Christ, means *to die instead of, as a vicarious and expiatory sacrifice*. This point, then, being settled, which Calvinists will cheerfully admit, we may ask, How is it possible for language more clearly and forcibly to teach that Christ died for *all men*, so as to make salvation possible for them, than it is taught in the passages adduced?

He is said to have died "for all," "for the world," "for every man," and, as if expressly to preclude all possibility for cavil, either in reference to the nature or the extent of his atonement, he is said to have given himself a "*ransom for all*," to be "*reconciling the world* unto himself," and to be the "*propitiation for the sins of the whole world.*"

The reply of the Calvinists to this argument is, that the terms "all men," "the world," etc., are sometimes used in Scripture in a limited sense.

In reference to this, we may observe that it cannot be admitted as a principle in criticism, that because a term is *sometimes* used in an unusual sense, and one different from the most obvious and general meaning, therefore it must so be understood in other places, even when there is nothing in the context to justify or require that unusual sense. Although we may admit that the terms "world" and "all men" may sometimes be used in a restricted sense, the conclusion which the Calvinists would draw from this admission is a *non sequitur*—it does not follow that the terms are to be restricted in the passages above quoted. So far from the context requiring this restriction, which would be necessary to the validity of the Calvinistic plea in question, we may confidently affirm that the entire connection and scope of the passages forbid the possibility of the terms being restricted.

When our Saviour says, "God so loved *the world* that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever believeth* in him," etc., it is clear that the world for whom the Saviour was given cannot be restricted to the elect; for the restriction which immediately follows, and promises "eternal life," not to the world, but to such of the world as should believe, is positive evidence that the world for whom the Saviour was given would not all be saved.

When St. Paul says, "We thus judge, that if one died *for all*, then were *all dead*," he proves the universality of spiritual death, or, (as Macknight paraphrases the passage,) of "condemnation to death," from the fact that Christ "died for all." Now if Christ only died for the elect, the apostle's argument could only prove that the elect were spiritually dead, or condemned to death, which would be a violent perversion of the sense of the passage.

When the apostle calls Christ the "Saviour of *all men*, especially of those that believe," believers are evidently specified as only a part of the "all men" of whom Christ is said to be "the Saviour." When St. John declares that Christ is "the propitiation for *our sins*, and not for *ours only*, but also for the *sins of the whole world*," believers are first specified, as identified with the apostle, by the phrase, "our sins;" and

hence, when it is added, "not for ours only, but also for the sins of *the whole world*," it is evident that the term should be taken in the widest sense as embracing all mankind.

The Scriptures are their own best interpreter; and, where it can be done, one passage should be explained by another. If, therefore, it could be shown that the same writers have, in other places, used these general terms to designate the *elect*, or believers, as such, there would be more plausibility in the restricted construction of Cavinists; but this is so far from being the case, that the elect, or believers, as such, are constantly in the Scriptures contradistinguished from "the world." The terms of universality, in the passages quoted, are never in Scripture applied to the elect, or believers, as such.

When St. John says that Christ is "the propitiation for the sins of *the whole world*," the sense in which he uses the term may be learned from that other expression of his, where he saith, "*the whole world* lieth in wickedness." When St. Paul says that Christ "tasted death for *every man*," he uses the phrase "every man" in as wide a sense as when he informs us that "every man" is to be raised from the dead "in his own order."

When the Saviour informs us that he came "not to condemn *the world*, but that *the world* through him might be saved," he refers to the same world of which he speaks when he says to his disciples, "If ye were of *the world*, *the world* would love his own; but because ye are not of *the world*, but I have chosen you out of *the world*, therefore *the world* hateth you." We may therefore arrive at the conclusion, from those passages of Scripture in which, in speaking of the death of Christ, terms of universality are used, that the atonement of Christ so extends to all mankind as to make salvation possible for them.

II. Our second argument is founded upon *those passages which contrast the death of Christ with the fall of our first parents.*

1 Cor. xv. 22: "For as in Adam *all die*, even so in Christ shall *all be made alive*." It is admitted that in this passage the resurrection of the body is the principal topic of discussion; nevertheless, there is here a clear inferential proof that Christ died for all men, so as to make salvation attainable by them. For if, by virtue of his death and resurrection, all men are to be redeemed from the grave, then it will follow that all men were represented by Christ in the covenant of redemption; and if so, he must have died as an expiation for their sins; and how he could do this without intending to make salvation attainable by them, will be difficult to reconcile with reason and Scripture.

Rom. v. 15, etc.: "But not as the offense, so also is the free gift. For

if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Here the "free gift" is represented as transcending, or going beyond, the "offense," which it could not do if it were only designed to make salvation possible to a part of those who fell by the "offense." Again: as "all men" are here represented as being brought into condemnation by "the offense of one," even so the "free gift" is said to come upon all men unto (εἰς, *in order to*) justification of life." This implies a possibility of salvation; and, from this passage, it is just as plain that all may be saved through Christ, as that all are condemned in Adam.

III. Our third argument is founded upon *those passages which teach that Christ died for such as do or may perish.*

2 Pet. ii. 1: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that *bought* them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." 1 Cor. viii. 11: "And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, *for whom Christ died.*" Rom. xiv. 15: "Destroy not him with thy meat, *for whom Christ died.*" Other passages of this class might be adduced, but we think these are sufficient to show that some of those who have been bought by Christ, and for whom he died, do or may perish. Now, as they were bought by Christ, and as he died for them, according to what has already been shown, their salvation was once possible; and if the salvation of some who perish was possible, the reasonable inference is that the salvation of all mankind is made possible through the atonement of Christ.

IV. Our fourth argument is founded upon *those passages which authorize the preaching of the gospel to all men, and require all men to repent and believe.*

Here we will first notice the grand commission of Christ to his apostles. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Mark xvi. 15, 16: "Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the gospel to *every creature.* He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Again: to show farther that it is made the duty of all men to repent and believe, we refer to the following passages:—John iii. 18, 36: "He that *believeth*

on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he *hath not believed* in the name of the only begotten Son of God. He that *believeth* on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that *believeth not* the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John xx. 31: "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." Acts xvi. 31: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts xvii. 30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now *commandeth all men everywhere to repent.*"

We quote the above passages merely as a sample of the general tenor of the gospel proclamation and requirement. That we may perceive the irresistible force of the proof from these texts that salvation is made attainable to all men, we observe—

1. The gospel means *good news.* It is a message of peace and salvation.

2. The commission to preach this gospel is given in *terms of universality.* The apostles are commanded to "go into *all the world*, and preach the gospel to *every creature.*" They are commanded to go and "teach all nations," and to teach them "to observe *all things* whatsoever" has been commanded.

3. Repentance toward God, and faith in the gospel message and plan of salvation, *are required of all to whom the gospel is preached.*

Nothing can be plainer than these positions, from the passages adduced. "*All men everywhere*" are commanded "to *repent.*" The promise to him that believeth is, that he "shall be saved," he "shall not be condemned," and he "shall have life" through the name of Christ. Now, upon the supposition that salvation is made attainable to all mankind, the propriety and consistency of all this are apparent; but upon the supposition that salvation is made attainable only to the elect portion of mankind, (according to the tenets of Calvinism,) we must deny every principle above stated as being proved by the Scriptures, or inevitably involve ourselves in manifest inconsistency and absurdity. This may be clearly shown in the following manner:

(1) The gospel is *good news;* or, as it is plainly expressed in Scripture, it is "glad tidings of great joy to all people." Now, if the gospel only proposes a possible salvation to the elect, it cannot be good news to those for whose salvation it contains no possible provision. If it be said that it provides at least temporal mercies, and the common "ineffectual" calls and influences of the Spirit, for all men, we reply, that the admission of this, according to the Calvinistic scheme, so far from

rendering the condition of the non-elect more tolerable, or furnishing the least evidence that the gospel can be good news to them, only aggravates the misery of their condition, and furnishes an additional evidence that the gospel cannot be to them good news, or "glad tidings of great joy."

If all the temporal blessings of life, as Calvinists do not deny, flow from the covenant of redemption, then it will follow that but for the atonement of Christ the blessing of personal existence itself never could have been enjoyed by any but the first sinning pair, and consequently none others could have been exposed to personal suffering; therefore, as it is clear that non-existence itself would be preferable to a state of inevitable, conscious, and eternal misery, so it is also evident that life, with its attendant mercies, according to Calvinism, is not a blessing, but a curse, to the non-elect; and if they derive this through the gospel, or atonement of Christ, that gospel itself must be to them a curse.

Again: if, as Calvinism teaches, these temporal mercies, and the common call and influence of the Spirit, cannot possibly be effectual with any but the elect, and the abuse of these mercies, and the rejection of this "common call" of the gospel and the Spirit, will tend to greater condemnation and misery, then it follows that, as the non-elect cannot possibly avoid this abuse and neglect, the mercies of life, and the calls and influences of the gospel and the Spirit tend inevitably to the aggravation of their misery, and must be to them a real curse.

(2) The commission to preach this gospel is given in terms of *universality.*

Now if all men are required to believe, this is reasonable and consistent; but if this is the duty only of the elect, then the non-elect do right in refusing to believe, and, of course, cannot consistently be condemned for their unbelief; which conclusion is flatly contradictory to the Scriptures. But if it be said that the non-elect are required to believe, although they cannot possibly do so unlesss God see proper to give them the moral ability, which he has from eternity determined to withhold, then it will follow that God, who is said not to be a "hard master," requires more of his creatures than they can possibly perform, and condemns and punishes them eternally for not doing absolute impossibilities; which is alike repugnant to reason, justice, and Scripture.

(3) *Repentance and faith* are required of *all men.*

If this be denied, the whole tenor of the gospel is flatly contradicted, and such as can be driven to so fearful a position we may justly apprehend are beyond the reach of reason or Scripture. But if it be

admitted that all men are required to repent and believe, then we ask according to Calvinism, for what purpose is this requirement made? If the salvation of the non-elect is absolutely impossible, how could they be saved, even if we were to suppose them to believe? Could their faith effect that which God has decreed never shall be effected? Surely not. And how, we ask, can salvation be promised on the condition of faith, and damnation be threatened as the consequence of unbelief, if neither the one nor the other depends in the least upon the agency of man?

We are driven to the conclusion that, according to Calvinism, both *salvation* (the *end*) and *faith* (the means) are absolutely impossible to the non-elect; and that therefore we must either deny that the gospel commission addresses them, and makes it their duty to repent and believe, or admit that they are to be eternally punished, by a just and merciful Creator, for not attaining an impossible end by the use of impossible means. The latter alternative involves horrible absurdities; the former contradicts the Bible: for Calvinists there is no middle ground; and they may be left to choose their position for themselves.

V. Our fifth argument is founded upon *those passages which show that salvation is offered to all, and that men's failure to obtain salvation is attributable to their own fault.*

Deut. xxx. 19: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." Isa. lv. 7: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Ezek. xxxiii. 11: "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Prov. i. 24, 25: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof."

In the New Testament, we read the following:—John v. 40: "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John iii. 19: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Matt. xxiii. 37: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" 2 Pet. iii. 9: "The Lord is not slack concern-

ing his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Rev. xxii. 17: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

The passages of Scripture belonging to the present class are very numerous, but the above are so explicit that it is needless to multiply quotations. It only remains for us to inquire in what manner the effort is made by Calvinists to evade their force. As there are no texts of a like plain and explicit character to oppose to these, and show that Christ *did not* so die for all men as to authorize the offer of salvation to *all*, and to render the damnation of those that perish attributable to their own fault, the truth of this leading position is seldom denied by Calvinists of the present day. But the great difficulty is, to reconcile the principles of Calvinism with the doctrine here so clearly established. Their general course has been, to descant upon the nature of general and effectual calling, the distinction between natural and moral ability, the invincibility of divine grace, etc., and then, as if conscious that they had failed in their attempt to reconcile their principles with this Bible truth, they have begged the question, and taking it for granted that the tenets of Calvinism (the very thing in dispute) are true, they have launched forth in a strain of pathetic admonition concerning the imbecility of human reason and the impiety of "man's replying against God."

That such may clearly be seen to be the course taken by Calvinists on this subject, I will here present a quotation from one of their standard writers:

"Several distinctions have been proposed, in order to throw some light on this dark subject. The external call, it has been said, is extended to the elect and the reprobate in a different manner. It is addressed to the elect primarily and directly, the ministry of the gospel having been instituted for their sake, to gather them into the Church, insomuch that, if none of them remained to be saved, it would cease. It respects the reprobate secondarily and indirectly, because they are mixed with the elect, who are known to God alone, and consequently it could not be addressed to them without the reprobate being included. This dispensation has been illustrated by rain, which, descending upon the earth, according to a general law, the final cause of which is the fructification of the soil, falls upon places where it is of no use, as rocks and sandy deserts. Again: it has been said that the end of the external call may be viewed in a twofold light, as it respects God, and as it

respects the call; and these may be distinguished as the end of the worker and the end of the work. The end of the work, or of the external call, is the salvation of men, because it is the natural tendency of the preaching of the gospel to lead them to faith and repentance. But this is not the end of the worker, or God, who does not intend to save all who are called, but those alone to whom he has decreed to give effectual grace. I shall not be surprised to find that these distinctions have not lessened the difficulty in your apprehension. While they promise to give a solution of it, they are neither more nor less than a repetition of it in different words. I shall subjoin only another observation, which has been frequently made, that although God does not intend to save the reprobate, he is serious in calling them by the gospel; for he declares to them what would be agreeable to him, namely, that they should repent and believe, and he promises, most sincerely, eternal life to all who shall comply. The call of the gospel does not show what he has proposed to do, but what he wills men to do. From his promises, his threatenings, and his invitations, it only appears that it would be agreeable to him that men should do their duty, because he necessarily approves of the obedience of his creatures, and that it is his design to save some of them; but the event demonstrates that he had no intention to save them all; and this should not seem strange, as he was under no obligation to do so. Mr. Burke, in his treatise concerning the sublime and beautiful, has observed, when speaking of the attempt of Sir Isaac Newton to account for gravitation by the supposition of a subtle elastic ether, that 'when we go but one step beyond the immediately sensible qualities of things, we go out of our depth. All we do after is but a faint struggle that shows we are in an element which does not belong to us.' We may pronounce, I think, these attempts to reconcile the universal call of the gospel with the sincerity of God, to be a faint struggle to extricate ourselves from the profundities of theology. They are far, indeed, from removing the difficulty. We believe, on the authority of Scripture, that God has decreed to give salvation to some, and to withhold it from others. We know, at the same time, that he offers salvation to all in the gospel; and to suppose that he is not sincere, would be to deny him to be God. It may be right to endeavor to reconcile these things, because knowledge is always desirable, and it is our duty to seek it as far as it can be attained. But if we find that beyond a certain limit we cannot go, let us be content to remain in ignorance. Let us reflect, however, that we are ignorant in the present case only of the connection between two truths, and not of the truths themselves, for these are clearly stated in the Scriptures. We ought there-

fore to believe both, although we cannot reconcile them. Perhaps the subject is too high for the human intellect in its present state. It may be that, however correct our notions of the divine purposes seem, there is some misapprehension, which gives rise to the difficulty. In the study of theology, we are admonished at every step to be humble, and feel the necessity of faith, or an implicit dependence upon the testimony of Him who alone perfectly knows himself, and will not deceive us." (Dick's Theology, Lecture 65.)

In reference to the foregoing, we may observe that Dr. Dick fully admits the universality of the calls and invitations of the gospel, but contends, at the same time, that God "intends to save those alone to whom he has decreed to give effectual grace." To reconcile this with the sincerity of God, after repeating several of the commonly used Calvinistic solutions, he intimates is beyond the powers of man, and the attempt should be placed among "the faint struggles to extricate ourselves from the profundities of theology."

This, while it speaks well for the candor of the learned author, is a fair acknowledgment that human reason cannot reconcile the leading principle of Calvinism with the leading principle of the gospel. The leading principle of Calvinism, which distinguishes it from Arminianism, is, that *salvation is not made possible to all men.* The leading principle of the gospel is, that *salvation is offered to all, and those who perish do so through their own fault.* Now these two propositions, it is admitted, are irreconcilable by human reason. If so, when it shall be clearly proved from the Bible that the gospel does not make salvation possible to all men, then the attempt to reconcile them may be styled "a faint struggle to extricate ourselves from the profundities of theology." But as that proposition is the very point in dispute, which we contend never has been, and never can be, proved, this, *we* would say, is only "a faint struggle" by Calvinists "to extricate themselves," not from "the profundities of theology," but from the *absurdities of Calvinism!*

Either it is the duty of all men to believe the gospel, or it is not. If we say it is not, we plainly contradict the Scriptures which we have quoted. If we say that it is, then it follows that it is possible for all men to believe, or it is the duty of some men to do what is absolutely impossible—which is absurd. But if we admit that it is possible for all men to believe, then it follows, either that those from whom God has decreed to withhold the moral ability to believe, may believe, or he has not so decreed in reference to any. To admit the former proposition implies a contradiction; to admit the latter, destroys Calvinism.

Again, if we admit that all men may attain unto faith, then it follows that all men may attain unto salvation, or that some believers may perish. The latter is contradictory to Scripture; the former is contradictory to Calvinism.

Farther: as we have shown from the Scriptures that those who fail to obtain salvation do so through their own fault, and not through any fault of God, then it follows either that some may be saved without faith, or that all who lack saving faith do so through their own fault; but if all who lack saving faith do so through their own fault, then their not believing cannot result solely from the decree of God to withhold from them the moral ability to believe; otherwise they are made answerable, and even punishable, for the divine decrees. To suppose that men are answerable and punishable for the divine decrees, is either to suppose that the decrees are wrong, which is impious, or to suppose that men are to be eternally punished for what is right, which is alike unscriptural and absurd.

Calvinists sometimes, in order to evade the consequences resulting from their position, (that the reprobate are justly punishable for their unbelief, notwithstanding God has decreed to withhold from them that ability without which it is impossible for them to believe,) endeavor to elude the question, by asserting that the reprobate continue in unbelief willingly, and in rejecting the gospel act according to their own choice. But this, instead of removing the difficulty, only shifts it one step farther; for if, as the Calvinists say, they have *no power to will*, or *to choose differently from what they do in this case*, they can no more be punishable for their perverse will and wicked choice than if they were as destitute of all mental and moral powers as a stock or a stone. To pursue this argument farther is needless. It is impossible, by any evasion or philosophical distinction, to avoid the conclusion that, according to those passages of Scripture which we have adduced to show that men's failure to obtain salvation is attributable to their own fault, the atonement of Christ has made salvation attainable to all mankind.

VI. Our next argument is founded upon *those passages which teach the possibility of final apostasy from the faith, and warn Christians against it.*

As the subject of apostasy will be particularly considered in its proper place, our remarks here shall be brief, and principally designed to show the necessary connection between those two great Bible doctrines—*the possibility of final apostasy*, and *the possibility of salvation to all.* These two doctrines mutually strengthen and support each other, insomuch that, if we admit the one, we cannot deny the other, without manifest

inconsistency. As the Calvinistic scheme denies any possibility of salvation to the reprobate, so it secures absolutely and infallibly the salvation of the elect.

If, then, it can be shown that any have finally apostatized, or are in danger of finally apostatizing, from a state of gracious acceptance, or even from a *hopeful* state, in reference to eternal salvation, to a *hopeless* one, it will follow that, as some who perish were in a state of possible salvation, even to those termed reprobates by the Calvinists, salvation is attainable; and if this be proved, the possibility of salvation to all men will not be denied.

As the Scriptures present instances of some who have fallen from a hopeful to a hopeless state, so they are full of warnings to the righteous, which show that they are not secure against the possibility of a similar apostasy. 2 Thess. ii. 10–12: "Because they received not the love of the truth that they *might be saved.* And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all *might be damned,* who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." From this passage it is evident, 1. That these characters were once in a hopeful state; they "might" have been "saved;" consequently their state was superior to that of the Calvinistically reprobate. 2. They fell from that state to a state of hopeless abandonment; they were judicially given over, and divinely visited with "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all *might be damned;*" consequently they could not have belonged to the Calvinistically elect.

Heb. vi. 4–6: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, ('and yet have fallen away'—Macknight,) to renew them again unto repentance."

We here enter into no discussion of the peculiar character of these apostates, farther than to observe, 1. That their apostasy was *hopeless*—it was "impossible to renew them again unto repentance;" this the Calvinists admit. 2. Their state had been *hopeful.* This is evident from the reason given for the subsequent hopelessness of their condition. If, as here stated, the hopelessness of their condition arose from the impossibility of "renewing them again unto repentance," it necessarily follows that if they could have been thus "renewed," their case would have been hopeful. And if so, then their case once was hopeful; for the hopelessness of their condition is made to appear, not from the "impossibility" of "renewing them" unto a genuine repentance, which (according to Calvinism) they had never experienced, but the same

repentance which they once had. This is evident from the import of the word "AGAIN"—"It is impossible to renew them *again* unto repentance." Therefore it follows that their former repentance was genuine; and these apostates had evidently passed from a *hopeful* to a *hopeless* condition. As the condition of the Calvinistically reprobate is *never hopeful*, they could not have belonged to that class; and as the condition of the Calvinistically elect is *never hopeless*, so neither could they have belonged to that class. It thus appears that the above passage cannot be interpreted on Calvinistic principles; nor in any way, with consistency, without admitting the possibility of salvation to all men.

Again, that the Scriptures are full of *cautions* to the righteous, and *warnings* against apostasy, is admitted by Calvinists. From this it may be conclusively argued, 1. That, upon the supposition that the righteous are in no danger of final apostasy, there can be no propriety in warning them against it. 2. If the righteous are in danger of final apostasy, then it follows, either that the reprobate, according to Calvinism, may obtain pardon here, or that the elect may perish everlastingly: either of which is destructive to the Calvinistic tenets, and demonstrative that the cautions and warnings given to the righteous in the Scriptures, can only be consistently interpreted upon the supposition that salvation is attainable by all men.

The sum of what has been said is briefly this: The Scriptures prove the proposition with which we set out—

1. By those texts in which, in speaking of the death or atonement of Christ, terms of universality are used.

2. By those which contrast the death of Christ with the fall of our first parents.

3. By those which teach that Christ died for such as do, or may, perish.

4. By those which authorize the preaching of the gospel to all men, and require all men to repent and believe.

5. By those which show that salvation is offered to all, and that men's failure to obtain it is attributable to their own fault.

6. By those which teach the possibility of final apostasy from the faith, and warn Christians against it.

According to the plain and unsophisticated meaning of all these classes of Scripture texts, we think it has been made to appear that *the atonement of Christ so extends to all men as to make their salvation attainable.*

In this discussion, we have appealed directly to the Scriptures, and although we have only adduced a small number of the passages which

directly bear upon the question, yet we deem farther quotations on this head unnecessary.

It remains yet to consider those passages from which Calvinists deduce inferential proofs of their peculiar views of predestination, election, etc., and the bearing of those subjects upon the great question before us, as well as to examine the prominent reasons by which the view herein presented has been defended or assailed. But these points we defer for another chapter.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXI.

QUESTION 1. What is the substance of the brief account given of Arminianism?

2. In what three points connected with the proposed question do all genuine Arminians agree?
3. Why may we appeal with confidence to the Scriptures on this question?
4. What is the main proposition considered in this chapter?
5. Upon what class of texts is the first argument based?
6. What are the passages adduced?
7. In what way do Calvinists attempt to evade their force?
8. What is the reply to their reasoning on this subject?
9. Upon what class of texts is the second argument based, and what are they?
10. Upon what class of texts is the third argument based?
11. What are the texts, and how is the proof deduced?
12. Upon what class of texts is the fourth argument based?
13. What are the texts, and how is the proof deduced?
14. Upon what class of texts is the fifth argument based?
15. What are the texts adduced?
16. In what manner have Calvinists replied?
17. From whom is a quotation made for illustration?
18. What is said in reference to this quotation?
19. In what manner is the argument from these passages of Scripture carried out?
20. Upon what class of texts is the sixth argument based?
21. What two great doctrines are here said to be intimately connected?
22. What are the texts adduced?
23. How is the argument founded upon them?
24. How is an argument founded upon the cautions given to Christians?
25. How is the whole argument of this chapter summed up?
26. What grand proposition does it establish?
27. What important points are deferred for another chapter?

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ATONEMENT — ITS EXTENT — PREDESTINATION, ELECTION, FOREKNOWLEDGE, AND SOVEREIGNTY.

In the preceding chapter, we endeavored to prove, by a direct appeal to the Scriptures, that *the atonement so extends to all men as to make salvation possible for them.*

That there are no texts of a direct and positive character in the Bible to disprove this position, has, by Calvinists themselves, generally been admitted. Yet, by inferential evidence from Scripture, as well as by a train of philosophical reasoning, they have endeavored to build up and sustain a system of doctrine exhibiting a partial atonement, or, at least, an atonement which *does not make salvation possible for all mankind.*

In order to sustain this system, Calvinists argue from the subject of the divine prescience, predestination, election, the divine sovereignty, etc., as they conceive them to be taught in the Bible. A particular examination of those subjects, so as to show that, according to the true interpretation of Scripture, no good reason can be deduced from that source in opposition to the general position which we have endeavored to sustain, is the matter now claiming our attention.

That the doctrines of the *divine prescience* and *divine sovereignty*, of *predestination* and *election*, are taught in the Bible, is admitted by Arminians as well as Calvinists. None who admit the truth of revelation can deny them. Yet, with regard to their true import, there has been much controversy; nor is it likely that, on these difficult questions, a unity of sentiment among professed Christians is soon to be realized.

The Arminian understands these subjects, as presented in the Scriptures, in perfect consistency with the great doctrine of general redemption, which provides, according to the proposition established in our last chapter, a possible salvation for all men; whereas the Calvinist understands them in such sense as to deduce from them arguments, satisfactory to his mind, for the establishment of his peculiar views of *particular*

redemption, and a special provision for the salvation of the elect, to the exclusion of any possibility of salvation to the rest of mankind.

Whether the Calvinists can really establish their peculiar views upon these subjects from the Scriptures, we shall presently consider. But, in order that we may proceed with as much fairness as possible, we choose, first, briefly to state the leading features of their system, in the language of their own acknowledged standards.

As the "Westminster Confession of Faith" is not only in doctrine the standard of the Church of Scotland, but also of the English and American Presbyterians, we quote from that volume, Chapter III., as follows:

"3. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.

"4. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreördained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

"5. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace.

"6. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreördained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.

"7. The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."

To complete more fully the account of this doctrine, we also quote from the "Larger Catechism," adopted by the Church of Scotland, the answers to the twelfth and thirteenth questions:

"God's decrees are the wise, free, and holy acts of the counsel of his will; whereby, from all eternity, he hath, for his own glory, unchangeably foreördained whatsoever comes to pass in time, especially concerning angels and men.

"God, by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace to be manifested in due time, hath elected some angels to glory; and, in Christ, hath chosen some men to eternal life, and the means thereof; and also, according to his sovereign power, and the unsearchable counsel of his own will, (whereby he extendeth or withholdeth favor as he pleaseth,) hath passed by and foreördained the rest to dishonor and wrath, to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice."

As a comment upon the foregoing articles, and as a brief and comprehensive summary of the principal features in the Calvinistic scheme, we subjoin the following from Dr. Hill:

"These quotations suggest the following propositions, which may be considered as constituting the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, and in which there is an explication of most of the terms:

"1. God chose out of the whole body of mankind, whom he viewed in his eternal decree as involved in guilt and misery, certain persons who are called the elect, whose names are known to him, and whose number, being unchangeably fixed by his decree, can neither be increased nor diminished; so that the whole extent of the remedy offered in the gospel is conceived to have been determined beforehand by the divine decree.

"2. As all the children of Adam were involved in the same guilt and misery, the persons thus chosen had nothing in themselves to render them more worthy of being elected than any others; and therefore the decree of election is called in the Calvinistic system absolute, by which word is meant that it arises entirely from the good pleasure of God, because all the circumstances which distinguish the elect from others are the fruit of their election.

"3. For the persons thus chosen, God from the beginning appointed the means of their being delivered from corruption and guilt; and by these means, effectually applied in due season, he conducts them at length to everlasting life.

"4. Jesus Christ was ordained by God to be the Saviour of these persons, and God gave them to him to be redeemed by his blood, to be called by his Spirit, and finally to be glorified with him. All that Christ did in the character of Mediator, was in consequence of this original appointment of the Father, which has received from many

divines the name of the covenant of redemption—a phrase which suggests the idea of a mutual stipulation between Christ and the Father, in which Christ undertook all that work which he executed in his human nature, and which he continues to execute in heaven, in order to save the elect—and the Father promised that the persons for whom Christ died should be saved by his death. According to the tenor of this covenant of redemption, the merits of Christ are not considered as the cause of the decree of election, but as a part of that decree—in other words, God was not moved by the mediation of Christ to choose certain persons out of the great body of mankind to be saved, but having chosen them, he conveys all the means of salvation through the channel of this mediation.

"5. From the election of certain persons, it necessarily follows that all the rest of the race of Adam are left in guilt and misery. The exercise of the divine sovereignty in regard to those who are not elected, is called reprobation; and the condition of all having been originally the same, reprobation is called absolute in the same sense with election. In reprobation there are two acts, which the Calvinists are careful to distinguish. The one is called preterition, the passing by those who are not elected, and withholding from them those means of grace which are provided for the elect. The other is called condemnation, the act of condemning those who have been passed by, for the sins which they commit. In the former act, God exercises his good pleasure, dispensing his benefits as he will; in the latter act, he appears as a judge, inflicting upon men that sentence which their sins deserve. If he had bestowed upon them the same assistance which he prepared for others, they would have been preserved from that sentence; but as their sins proceeded from their own corruption, they are thereby rendered worthy of punishment, and the justice of the Supreme Ruler is manifested in condemning them, as his mercy is manifested in saving the elect." (Hill's Lectures, Book IV., Chap. vii., Sec. 3.)

According to the foregoing account, it appears that the following are leading tenets in the Calvinistic scheme, viz.:

1. That by *predestination*, *foreördination*, or the *decrees* of God, all things, whether great or small, whether good or evil, whether they relate t the physical or moral universe, whether they relate to the history of angels or to the actions of men, were, from all eternity, or before time began, firmly and unalterably fixed and determined, according to the will of God.

2. That by this predestination, or foreördination, "some men and

angels" were elected or chosen to everlasting life, and others reprobated or set apart to everlasting death.

3. That the election of some, and the reprobation of others, had no regard to faith and obedience on the one hand, or unbelief and disobedience on the other, as foreseen conditions, or causes leading thereunto.

4. That this election and reprobation are *personal, unconditional,* and *absolute,* insomuch that the "number of the elect" or of the reprobate can "neither be increased nor diminished."

5. That the election of some, and the reprobation of others, is the sole originating cause of the faith and obedience of the elect, on the one hand, and of the lack of faith and obedience of the reprobate on the other.

To sustain the peculiarities of the system which we have thus briefly sketched, the Calvinists appeal to the scriptures in which the doctrines of predestination and election are taught, and institute a course of reasoning founded mainly on the divine prescience and sovereignty. That we may have a clear view of the subject, and understand the nature of their arguments, we now proceed particularly to the investigation of the Scripture doctrine of election, predestination, etc.

I. General import of election. The term *election,* in the Greek Testament, is *ἐκλογή, a choice,* from the verb *ἐκλέγω, to choose;* hence the signification of the verb *to elect* is *to choose,* and the noun *election* signifies *a choice.* According to this definition of the term, we may easily perceive that, upon principles of rationality, several things are indispensable to constitute *election.*

1. There must be an *intelligent agent* to choose. As the act of choosing can only be performed by an intelligent being, to suppose an election to exist without such an agent would be absurd.

2. This intelligent being must be possessed of the principle of *free moral agency.* Choice necessarily implies freedom; hence, if the supposed agent be not morally free or unnecessitated in the act, he cannot, in the proper sense, be an agent at all, but is only an instrument, wielded by impelling forces; and in such case, as there could be no choice, in the true import of the term, so there could be no election.

3. In the next place, there must be *objects* presented to the mind of this intelligent agent, in order that he may make the choice, or selection. To suppose an election to exist where there are no objects in reference to which to make the choice, would be as absurd as to suppose that there could be color, division, or figure, without something colored, divided, or figured.

4. Next, there must be a *difference*, real or imaginary, in the objects, in reference to which the choice is made. Where there is no difference, in the proper sense, there can be no choice. It is true, that two or more objects may be presented to the mind, and the one may be taken, and the others left, merely because it is not convenient or proper to take all; but in this case, there cannot properly be any rational choice. A choice or election implies a reason on which it is founded; and this reason, or ground of choice, must be supposed to exist in the objects in reference to which the choice is made.

5. There must be *a time* in which the act of choosing takes place. To suppose that an act has been performed, and yet to suppose that there was no time in which it was performed, is manifestly absurd. Hence, we must either deny that to choose or elect is an act at all, or we must admit a time for its performance.

Now, we think it must be so plain that all the above specified particulars are essential to constitute election, that farther illustration or proof would be needless. Wherever the five particulars above enumerated are found to unite, an election must exist; but if any one of the five be lacking, an election cannot, on rational principles, exist. With these remarks upon the general definition of election, we proceed to examine the Scripture illustration of this doctrine.

II. Specific kinds of election. In opening the Bible upon this subject, we find that there are several different kinds of election presented to our view.

1. There is a *personal election of individuals to a special office or work.*

Christ was chosen, or elected, to the great office of *Mediator and Redeemer*, that he might enter upon the great work of saving an apostate world. In reference to this election, we read, in Isa. xlii. 1: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine *elect*, in whom my soul delighteth."

King Cyrus was also chosen, or elected, for the special work of rebuilding the temple. In reference to this work, he was "called" by the Lord, and designated as his "shepherd" and "his anointed."

The "*twelve apostles*" were elected to their peculiar office by the Saviour; and *St. Paul* was specially chosen, or elected, to be the "apostle of the Gentiles."

In reference to this species of election, a little reflection will evince that it perfectly accords with the general definition of the subject given above. All the five requisites to constitute election may readily be seen to meet in each case specified. And although it is personal, individual,

and, in a certain sense, absolute, yet it has no reference whatever to the fixing of the eternal destinies of men.

The Saviour was chosen as the great Redeemer of the world, because he was the only proper and adequate Being for the accomplishment of the exalted work.

Cyrus was selected as a suitable character for the instrumental accomplishment of the divine purpose in the rebuilding of the temple; but this election neither secured nor prevented the eternal salvation of the Persian monarch.

The "twelve apostles" were chosen by our Lord, as suitable persons to accompany him in his itinerant ministry, to be witnesses of his miracles and of his resurrection, and to be the first ministers of his religion; but this election did not absolutely secure their eternal salvation, for one of their number grievously apostatized and went to perdition.

St. Paul was elected as a suitable minister to bear the gospel message to the learned Gentiles; but this election did not absolutely secure his eternal salvation, for we hear him strongly expressing his fears "lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a *castaway*." So that it is clear that, from this personal and individual election to a peculiar office or work, no countenance is given to the Calvinistic notion of personal and unconditional election, from all eternity, to everlasting life.

2. The second species of election presented in Scripture is *that of* NATIONS, *or* BODIES OF PEOPLE, *to the participation of peculiar privileges and blessings, conferred upon them for the accomplishment of some great object of divine benevolence, in reference to others as well as to themselves.*

(1) Thus, *Abraham and his descendants* were anciently chosen as the peculiar people of God, to receive the divine law, to become conservators of the true worship, and to be the means of illumination, and of great and numerous blessings, to the world at large. In reference to this election, we read, Amos iii. 2: "You only have I *known* of all the families of the earth." 1 Chron. xvi. 13: "Ye children of Jacob, his *chosen ones*." Acts xiii. 17: "The God of this people of Israel *chose* our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt." Deut. x. 15: "The Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he *chose* their seed after them, even you, above all people." Deut. xiv. 2: "The Lord *hath chosen* thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth."

Thus we discover that the Jews, as a nation, were, in a certain sense, an elect, chosen, and peculiar people; but this election, as all must admit, did not absolutely secure their eternal salvation. Their election, as a nation, had no such design, as we may see from the fact that many of them were not saved. This truth the Apostle Paul abundantly teaches. He says that "with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness." He specifies that some of them were "idolaters," some were "fornicators," some "tempted Christ," and that God "sware in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest." These were the "chosen, elected," and "peculiar people" of God. How vastly different is this from the Calvinistic, eternal, and unconditional election and reprobation, by which the everlasting destiny of "men and angels" is said to be unalterably fixed!

In this national election of the Jews there is also implied a corresponding national *rejection*, or *reprobation*, of the Gentiles. Election and reprobation are inseparable: the one necessarily implies the other. In the same sense in which the Jews were elected, the Gentiles were reprobated. As the former were elected to the enjoyment of peculiar privileges, so the latter were reprobated in reference to those privileges —that is, they were not called to their enjoyment, or placed in their possession. This national election, though we may admit that it conferred peculiar blessings upon one nation, which were denied to all others, yet it appears to present nothing in the divine administration revolting to the most pleasing and exalted view that can be taken of the principles of justice, equity, and benevolence. For be it remembered, that in proportion as the Jews were exalted above the Gentiles in point of privilege, even so, on that very account, more was required at their hands.

It is one of the unalterable principles of the divine government, that "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required," and *vice versa*. The man to whom "five talents" had been given, was required to improve all that he had received, while he to whom but "one talent" had been given, was only required to improve the same. Thus, while the Jews, to whom had been "committed the oracles of God," and to whom "pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises," were required to serve God with a fidelity and devotedness proportionate to their superior light and privileges, the Gentiles were only required to improve the privileges which had been conferred upon them, and to live up to the degree of light they possessed. Notwithstanding this election of the Jews to privileges so exalted, yet, as we have seen,

they were liable to misimprove them, and many of them did so misimprove and abuse them as to perish everlastingly; and finally, this chosen, elect, and peculiar people, for their wickedness and idolatry, their unbelief and rebellion, were severed and overthrown as a nation, their civil polity uprooted, their ecclesiastical establishment demolished, and the once favored tribes of Abraham doomed to wander in degradation and groan for centuries beneath the ban of Heaven.

But how was it with the Gentiles? Did this national election and reprobation, according to the Calvinistic interpretation of this doctrine, consign them to inevitable and eternal destruction? By no means. The supposition is not only repugnant to reason, and revolting to the feelings, but destitute of the least shadow of support from Scripture. In allusion to God's method of dealing with the ancient Gentiles, St. Paul says: "And the times of this ignorance God *winked at*"—that is, sent them no prophets to instruct them better, and consequently, in judging them, only required of them according to what they had.

St. Paul, in the second chapter to the Romans, clearly shows that "there is no respect of persons with God;" and that "the Gentiles, which have not the law," may "do by nature (that is, by the assistance which God affords them, independent of the written law) the things contained in the law," act up to the requirements of "their conscience," and be esteemed as "just before God." That those whom God saw proper to leave for a season in a state of Gentile darkness—destitute of written revelation—were not thereby precluded from all possibility of eternal salvation, is farther evident from several instances recorded in Scripture of pious heathen—such as Melchizedek, Job, and Cornelius; but the language of St. Peter must set this question at rest: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

Since, then, it is obvious from what has been said, that the national election of the Jews, and reprobation of the Gentiles, did not absolutely secure the salvation of the former, or the damnation of the latter, it is plain that from this election Calvinism can derive no aid. Indeed, so far was the calling of Abraham, and the establishment of the Church in his family, from implying the absolute dereliction of the Gentiles to eternal ruin, that it was designed as a means of illumination, and an unspeakable blessing, even to them. The establishment of the true worship in the family of Abraham was designed to counteract the prevalence of idolatry among the surrounding nations; and the entire Jewish system of jurisprudence and religion was indeed a "light shining in

a dark place." The peculiar position of their country, their intercourse with surrounding nations, both through commerce and by reason of their frequent captivities, with many concurring circumstances, tended to diffuse abroad the lights and blessings of Judaism. Even at their temple, there was found "the court of the Gentiles," where the "stranger from a far country" might join in the worship of the true God. How plain then must it be, that this election of one nation to peculiar privileges was designed also to "bless," though in a less degree, "all the families of the earth."

(2) A second example of this species of election is presented in *the calling of both Jews and Gentiles to the privileges of the gospel Church.*

There is a reference to this election in the following passages:—1 Pet. v. 13: "The Church that is at Babylon, *elected* together with you." 1 Pet. ii. 9: "But ye are a *chosen* generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." 1 Thess. i. 4: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your *election* of God."

That we may the better understand this election, be it remembered that the Jews, in many respects, were a typical people. Their calling and election to the peculiar privileges of the Mosaic dispensation were typical of the calling and election of both Jews and Gentiles to the superior privileges of the gospel. In the days of the apostles, the old dispensation gave place to the new. The Mosaic institution received its fulfillment; and vast multitudes of both Jews and Gentiles were called and elected to the glorious privileges of the gospel Church; not by virtue of natural descent from Abraham, but through the medium of "faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." The privileges to which they were here elected were both external—embracing all the means of grace, and outward blessings of Christianity; and internal—embracing the spiritual enjoyments and blessings of pure and heart-felt religion. Many were externally embraced in the Church, and in that sense elected to its privileges, who were not elected to the full enjoyment of the spiritual blessings of the gospel. The cause of this distinction is obvious. The condition upon which they could be elected to the external privileges was that of a formal profession; but the condition of election to the full privileges of the Church, both external and internal, both temporal and spiritual, was that of faith in God's Messiah. Many, no doubt, enjoyed the privileges of the former, who never attained unto the privileges of the latter, election. In reference to this, it may be said that "all were not *Israel* who were *of Israel*"—all were not elected to the spiritual who shared the external privileges of the gospel; but election in the external sense was in order to, or designed to promote, election

in the more proper sense, to the full enjoyment of the blessings of the gospel.

But let us inquire, in the next place, how this election to the privileges of the gospel Church, both external and spiritual, comports with the Calvinistic scheme. The election taught in that system is, 1. *Eternal*—"from all eternity." 2. It is *unconditional*—"without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving him thereunto." 3. It absolutely secures their eternal salvation—"their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased nor diminished."

Now, it can easily be proved that the election under consideration contains not one of the attributes of Calvinistic election as just presented.

(1) It is not *eternal*. Jews and Gentiles are called and elected to the privileges of the gospel, not "from all eternity," but in time. They are called by the gospel and elected, as the apostle has said, "through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience."

(2) It is not *unconditional*. "Repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," are everywhere presented as the condition upon which the privileges of the gospel Church are to be enjoyed.

(3) It does not *absolutely secure the eternal salvation of those thus elected*. That this is true so far as it is applied to the election to the external privileges of the gospel, Calvinists themselves will admit; and that it is also true as applied to the election of true believers to the spiritual, as well as the outward, privileges of the gospel, is evident from the numerous warnings given to such characters against "turning back to perdition," making "shipwreck of the faith," or "departing from the living God;" and especially is it evident from the language of St. Peter, where he exhorts believers to "give diligence to *make their calling and election sure*." Now, if it had been made sure "from all eternity," their "diligence" could not possibly have any tendency to make it sure. Again: the Calvinistic view of election absolutely precludes the non-elect from all possibility of salvation; but this election of collections of persons to gospel privileges has no such bearing whatever. Thousands who were not thus elected, or who were not of the Church in the apostles' days, have been brought in in subsequent times; and the gospel is still spreading more widely its influence, and swelling the number of its elected members. This Calvinists cannot deny.

Again, this election of Christians to Church privileges, so far from

being an evidence that others, not yet thus elected, are thereby excluded from the favor of God, has a direct tendency, and is really designed, to extend to them the same blessing of gospel fellowship. The Church is styled "the light of the world," and "the salt of the earth." This necessarily implies that those beyond its pale may become partakers of the same "light," and be purified by the same preservative grace, of which the actual members of the Church are now possessed. Hence we may arrive fairly at the conclusion that this election of nations, or large bodies of people, to the enjoyment of peculiar privileges affords no support to Calvinistic election.

3. The third and last species of election which we shall notice, as presented in the Bible, is that of *individuals chosen, or elected, to eternal life.*

This is brought to view in the following passages of Scripture:—Matt. xxii. 14: "For many are called, but few are *chosen.*" Eph. i. 4: "According as he *hath chosen* us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love." 1 Pet. i. 2: "*Elect* according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Col. iii. 12: "Put on therefore, as the *elect* of God, holy and beloved," etc.

These, and many other passages, although they may apply to that "collective" election already described, yet we admit that they also express the peculiar favor by which God calls and elects to eternal life all the finally faithful. That election of this personal and individual kind is frequently alluded to in the Scriptures, is admitted by Arminians as well as Calvinists; but the great matter of dispute relates to the sense in which the subject is to be understood. Calvinists say that this election is "from all eternity;" this Arminians deny, except so far as the foreknowledge or purpose of God to elect may be termed election.

Upon this question, then, concerning the *eternity* of personal and individual election, we remark, first, that to suppose that actual election can be "from all eternity," appears *manifestly absurd,* and inconsistent with the import of the term to elect. It signifies to choose: this implies *an act* of the mind, and every act implies a *time* in which it took place, and consequently a time *before* it took place. Hence it would appear that, unless we make the act of election an essential part of the divine nature, (which is absurd,) it cannot be eternal; for that attribute will apply properly to the divine essence only.

Again, the eternity of actual election is not only absurd, as we have seen, but it is also *unscriptural.*

St. Peter calls the saints, "elect, *through sanctification of the Spirit,*" etc. Now, if they are elected "through sanctification of the Spirit," they could not have been elected till they were sanctified by the Spirit, unless we say that the end precedes the means leading to that end, or that the effect precedes the cause, which is absurd. St. Paul styles the saints, "chosen through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Now, according to the same reasoning, they could not have been actually chosen before they believed the truth; consequently their actual election cannot be "from all eternity." We know that St. Paul, in the passage quoted, says: "God hath *from the beginning* chosen you," etc. But this cannot prove the eternity of actual election, without, as we have seen, contradicting what immediately follows; and we may be sure that the apostle did not mean to contradict himself.

The meaning of St. Paul may be explained by the language of St. Peter, when he styles the saints "elect *according to the foreknowledge* of God"—that is, in the purpose of God. So, St. Paul may mean that "God hath from the beginning (according to his foreknowledge, or in his purpose) chosen you," etc.

But even if we take the phrase "from the beginning" to refer to the commencement of the world, when God first laid the plan of salvation through Christ, it will not follow that the personal election of the Thessalonians was unconditional. The words may merely imply that God, from the very first institution of the covenant of grace, determined, from a foresight that they would believe and embrace the gospel, through that means to save them from their sins, and admit them to the heavenly felicity. So, then, we perceive that, whether we understand the texts in question to refer to the unconditional election of the believing character, according to the settled principles of the gospel, or to the conditional election of individual persons, according to the same divinely established condition of faith, in either case, there can be nothing derived from this source to justify the Calvinistic scheme of eternal, unconditional, and personal election to everlasting life.

That the Calvinistic view upon this subject is *self-contradictory and absurd*, may easily be shown by adverting to the true definition of election, and calling to mind the several indispensable requisites for its existence, according to what has already been shown.

In view of these principles, then, we will briefly consider this personal election to eternal life.

1. Before an election can exist, according to the principles of rationality, there must be an *intelligent agent* to perform the act of choosing. In reference to the election in question, God is this agent. St. Paul says: "According as he (God) hath chosen us in him," etc. On this point there can be no controversy. All agree that God is the great intelligent agent who chooses, or elects, whom he will to eternal life.

2. The second requisite to an election is, that the agent who performs the act of choosing be possessed of *moral freedom.* Here, also, there can be no controversy. All must agree that the Divine Being possesses moral freedom in the highest possible acceptation. He doeth "his good pleasure," and "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

3. The third thing requisite to constitute election is, that *objects* be presented to the mind of the intelligent agent, in reference to which he may make the choice. Here the Calvinistic scheme begins to limp; for if election be "from all eternity," it took place before the objects or persons existed concerning whom it was made. But if it be said that it took place in the purpose of God, who, looking forward into futurity, "seeth the end from the beginning," then it will follow that it was not *actual* election at all, but only a determination to elect in futurity, and Calvinism falls to the ground. The former position is absurd, the latter gives up the question; and Calvinists may *elect* either horn of the dilemma.

4. The fourth thing requisite to constitute election is, that there be a *real* or *imaginary difference* in the objects in reference to which the choice is made. The word *imaginary* is here inserted in order to make the definition apply to election universally, whether fallible man or the Infinite Mind be the agent in the choice; but as God is infinite in knowledge, it is clear that the term can have no application when the choice is performed by him; therefore, before the election in question can exist, there must be a real difference in the objects or persons concerning whom the choice is made. Even an intelligent creature can make no rational choice where no supposed difference exists; and can we suppose that the infinite God will act in a manner that would be justly deemed blind and irrational in man? The thought is inadmissible. However far beyond the ken of the puny intellect of man the principles may lie which sway the divine determinations, yet we may be well assured that every act of Deity is based upon a sufficient and infallible reason. If God selects, or chooses, some men to eternal life, and rejects others, as all admit to be the fact, there must be a good and sufficient reason for this election.

It will not do for Calvinists piously to tell us that "the Judge of all the earth will do right," and to think that this will put out of sight the difficulty which their doctrine here involves. That God will "do right," all admit; but the question is, *How can he do right if Calvinism be true?* Nor will it do for them to tell us that this election is "according to the good pleasure of God's will." This we admit; but the question is, How can the Calvinistic presentation of this subject be reconciled with the declarations of Scripture in reference to the divine will? Does not Calvinism, by telling us that this election of some men to eternal life is "without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving him thereunto," render this election perfectly irreconcilable with the divine character?

If, as Calvinism teaches, this choice of some men and rejection of others is made without any reference whatever to moral character, but according to the "good pleasure of God," we might perhaps still suppose that there was a sufficient reason to justify it, though concealed from our view; were it not that we are immediately informed that the moral character of the elect and reprobate, as contemplated by the Almighty in his electing love, was precisely the same. This tenet of Calvinism not only puts the reason of the choice beyond our reach, but it does more—it puts it out of existence; for if the reason be not founded on moral character, there is no consideration left, according to the Scriptures, upon which it can be founded. Agreeably to the Bible, in the awards of the judgment-day, moral character alone is taken into the account; and this is the only ground of distinction by which God can be influenced, in determining one person for glory and another for perdition. As Calvinism disavows this distinction as having any influence in election, it deprives the Divine Being of any possible reason worthy of his character for the personal election of men to everlasting life.

If it be said, Calvinists themselves declare that God always acts rationally, and has an infinite reason for all his acts, we reply, that this only proves that their system is *self-contradictory;* for, as we have already shown, their scheme discards any difference in the moral character of men as influencing election; and the Scriptures everywhere show that God, in his dealings with men in reference to eternity, can be swayed by no other consideration.

We arrive at the conclusion, therefore, that however different the teachings of Calvinism, if one man is elected to everlasting life and another consigned to perdition, it is not the result of an arbitrary, capri-

cious, and unreasonable partiality, but accords with reason, equity, and justice, and is a glorious display of the harmonious perfections of God. It is because the one is good and the other bad; the one is righteous and the other unrighteous; the one is a believer and the other an unbeliever; or the one is obedient and the other rebellious. These are the distinctions which reason, justice, and Scripture recognize; and we may rest assured they are the only distinctions which God regards in electing his people to glory, and sentencing the wicked to perdition.

5. The last thing requisite to constitute election is, that there be a *time* at which the act of choosing takes place. As has already been shown, the election of individuals to eternal life may be considered as existing only in the *foreknowledge* or *purpose of God*, or it may be viewed as *actual*. There is no possible middle ground between these positions. If we adopt the former, and say that election is only "from all eternity" when viewed as the divine *purpose* to elect, we renounce one of the favorite dogmas of Calvinism, which holds that election is absolute from all eternity, and in no sense dependent on, or resulting from, foreknowledge. If we adopt the latter, we are involved in the absurdity of saying that an *actual choice* has been made, and yet that there was *no time* in which the act took place. And more than this, we also contradict the Scripture, which plainly teaches that men are actually chosen to eternal life when they accede to the conditions of the gospel; their election is "through faith"—"sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." From what has been said, we think it evident that neither the election of individuals to a particular office or work, nor the election of nations, or bodies of people, to peculiar privileges, nor that of individuals to eternal life, gives the least sanction to the Calvinistic scheme.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXII.

QUESTION 1. From what subjects do Calvinists argue, to sustain their system?
2. Are election, predestination, etc., Scripture doctrines?
3. How are they understood by the Arminian?
4. How by the Calvinist?
5. What summaries of Calvinism are quoted?
6. From what is the term *election* derived?
7. What five particulars are presented, as essential to constitute election?
8. What is the first election mentioned?
9. What instances of it are given?
10. Why does it give no support to Calvinism?
11. What is the second species of election specified?
12. What is the first instance given of this?
13. What scriptures contain it?
14. How does it appear that it gives no support to Calvinism?
15. What is the next instance given?
16. In what scriptures is it contained?
17. How does it appear that it gives no support to Calvinism?
18. What is the third species of election?
19. In what scriptures is it contained?
20. Does it afford any support to Calvinism?
21. Do the five requisites of election apply to it?
22. Do they in the Calvinistic sense?
23. How may this be shown?

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE ATONEMENT — ITS EXTENT — ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION — SPECIAL SCRIPTURES EXAMINED.

In the preceding chapter, we progressed so far in the investigation of the subject of election, predestination, etc., as, first, to exhibit a brief view of the Calvinistic scheme, as set forth in the acknowledged standards of several Calvinistic Churches; and, secondly, to present what we conceive to be the scriptural account of this subject.

We now proceed to examine the *Scripture testimony* which Calvinists have alleged in support of their doctrine. To enter upon an exegetical discussion of every passage which they have quoted upon this subject, would be unnecessarily tedious; as the entire weight of their argument may be fully seen by an attention to those few prominent texts, which they almost invariably quote when they touch the Arminian controversy, and on which they mainly rely. Here the Bible of the Calvinist will almost instinctively open upon the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of the Epistle to the Romans.

I. We notice their argument from *what is said in reference to Jacob and Esau.*

Rom ix. 11–16: "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done either good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, (Rebecca,) The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

After the unanswerable refutations of the Calvinistic construction of this passage, furnished by such commentators and divines as Whitby, Taylor, Benson, Fletcher, Adam Clarke, etc., it is a little surprising that any intelligent Calvinist should continue to argue from it in favor of absolute personal election. This is more especially remarkable, as

several of the most acute divines of the Calvinistic school have been impelled by candor to adopt the Arminian interpretation of the passage now before us — among whom we might mention Dr. Macknight of Scotland, and Professor Stuart of Andover. The latter, however, appears not so fully to renounce the Calvinistic interpretation as the former; but that he yields one of the principal points, may be seen from the following remarks on the thirteenth verse: "The precedence, then, of Jacob is established by this declaration; but in what respect? In a temporal one, it would seem, so far as this instance is concerned. That the whole refers to the bestowment of temporal blessings, and the withholding of them, is clear, not only from this passage, but from comparing Gen. xxv. 23, xxvii. 27, etc. As to *ἐμίσησα*, its meaning here is rather *privative* than *positive*. When the Hebrews compared a stronger affection with a weaker one, they called the first love, and the other hatred."

After referring such as desire a critical and minute exposition of this passage to the commentators already mentioned, we may observe that the argument for personal and absolute election to eternal life, from this passage, is entirely dependent upon two positions, which, if they can be fairly proved, will establish the Calvinistic view; but a failure to establish either of them, will be fatal to the whole scheme. These positions are, 1. That the election here spoken of referred to Jacob and Esau, *personally* and *individually*. 2. That it referred to *the absolute determination of their eternal destiny*. Now, if either of these positions is seen to be untenable, notwithstanding the other may be established, it will inevitably follow that the election here presented to view, so far from establishing the Calvinistic doctrine, tends directly to its overthrow. How much more signal, then, must be the defeat of the Calvinist, if, upon examination, both these principles are found to be not only unsustained, but positively disproved! Such, we think, will be the result of an impartial investigation.

1. Then we inquire whether this election referred to Jacob and Esau *personally and individually*.

That it did not, but was intended to apply to two *nations*—the posterity of Jacob, (the Jews,) and the posterity of Esau, (the Edomites) —is evident, 1. From *the language of the entire passage*, of which the apostle, in accordance with his manner, only quotes as much as was essential to his argument. The passage is recorded in Gen. xxv. 23: "And the Lord said unto her, *Two nations* are in thy womb, and *two manner of people* shall be separated from thy bowels; and the *one people* shall be stronger than the *other people;* and the *elder* shall serve

the *younger*." So far, then, from the apostle referring to Jacob and Esau personally, we here have the direct Scripture to prove that although the names of Jacob and Esau are used, it is in a representative sense. "Two nations," or "two manner of people," were the subject of the prophecy. Concerning them, and not concerning Jacob and Esau, personally, it was said, "the elder shall serve the younger," and that "one shall be stronger than the other." 2. As it is contrary to the language of the prophecy that this passage should apply personally to Jacob and Esau, so it is *contrary to the truth of history*. Esau never did "serve" Jacob personally.

Again: from the first chapter of Malachi, it may be clearly seen that the *nations* of the Israelites and Edomites, and not the *persons* of Jacob and Esau, were the subject of the prophecy. "The burden of the word of the Lord to *Israel* by Malachi. I have *loved you*, (Israel, not Jacob,) saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord; yet I *loved* Jacob and I *hated* Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas *Edom* (not Esau personally) saith, We are impoverished," etc. Thus we see, from the Scriptures themselves, that the passage under consideration determines nothing in reference to Jacob and Esau, personally. Hence there can be no ground here for establishing the doctrine of personal and unconditional election.

2. We inquire whether this election referred to *the determination of the eternal destiny* of the persons concerned.

Now, even if it could be made appear (which we have just seen to be contrary to Scripture) that Jacob and Esau are here personally referred to, Calvinism can derive no support, unless it be also shown that this election and reprobation, or this *loving of Jacob* and *hating of Esau*, referred to their eternal destiny. That it had no reference whatever to their eternal destiny, either as individuals or nations, but that it related entirely to temporal blessings, we might almost leave to the testimony of the most intelligent Calvinistic commentators themselves.

The decision of Professor Stuart on this point we have already seen. His words are, "The whole refers to the bestowment of temporal blessings, and the withholding of them," and he directly sanctions the interpretation that the term *ἐμίησα*, in the phrase, "Esau have I hated," implies not positive hatred, but only a less degree of love.

Macknight says: "What God's *hatred* of Esau was, is declared in the words of the prophecy which immediately follow, namely, '*and laid*

his mountains waste.'" As Macknight was himself a Calvinist, and taught the doctrine of absolute and personal election, though he acknowledged it was not contained in the scripture before us, his testimony may, on that account, be deemed the more valuable; hence we quote from him the following acute observations:

"1. It is neither said, nor is it true, of Jacob and Esau personally, that the 'elder served the younger.' This is only true of their posterity. 2. Though Esau had served Jacob personally, and had been inferior to him in worldly greatness, it would have been no proof at all of Jacob's election to eternal life, nor of Esau's reprobation. As little was the subjection of the Edomites to the Israelites in David's days a proof of the election and reprobation of their progenitors. 3. The apostle's professed purpose in this discourse being to show that an election bestowed on Jacob's posterity by God's free gift might either be taken from them, or others might be admitted to share therein with them, it is evidently not an election to eternal life, which is never taken away, but an election to external privileges only. 4. This being an election of the whole posterity of Jacob, and a reprobation of the whole descendants of Esau, it can only mean that the nation which was to spring from Esau should be subdued by the nation which was to spring from Jacob; and that it should not, like the nations springing from Jacob, be the Church and people of God, nor be entitled to the possession of Canaan, nor give birth to the seed in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed. 5. The circumstance of Esau's being elder than Jacob was very probably taken notice of, to show that Jacob's election was contrary to the right of primogeniture, because this circumstance proved it to be from pure favor. But if his election had been to eternal life, the circumstance of his age ought not to have been mentioned, because it had no relation to that matter whatever."

We deem it useless to detain upon this subject. From what has been said, we arrive at the conclusion—

1. That this election was not *personal*, but *national*.

2. That it related, not to *eternal life*, but to *temporal blessings*.

The opposite of both these positions is essential to Calvinistic election; therefore it follows that this stereotyped argument of Calvinism, from the mooted case of "Jacob and Esau," so far from being sustained by Scripture, has been doubly confuted.

II. The second argument which we shall notice, as relied upon by the Calvinist, is based upon *what is said in reference to Pharaoh, and the "potter and the clay."*

The passage is recorded in Rom. ix. 17–24: "For the Scripture

saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"

That the argument attempted to be based upon this passage may be clearly seen in all its force, and fairly tested in as small a compass as practicable, we propose, first, to specify the several points insisted upon by Calvinists, the establishment of some, or all, of which is essential to the support of their doctrine, and then to examine the evidence by which these several points are assumed to be established. These points are—

1. That Pharaoh is given as an instance of unconditional and eternal reprobation, being created for the express purpose that the "power of God" might "be shown" in his eternal destruction.

2. That the hardening of Pharaoh's heart was effected by a direct influence, or positive influx, from God.

3. That in the reference to the parable of "the potter," the making of the "one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor," is designed to represent the right of God to create one man expressly for eternal life, and another for eternal destruction.

4. That the "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," are designed to represent persons expressly and designedly created and prepared by the Almighty for eternal death.

5. That the object of the apostle, in referring to the case of Pharaoh, and to the parable of the "potter and the clay," was to illustrate the doctrine of personal, unconditional, and eternal election and reprobation.

Were it necessary, it might easily be shown by a reference to numerous Calvinistic commentators and divines, that the above is a fair presentation of the positions assumed by them, when they would establish their system by a reference to the passage in question; but this, we

presume, cannot be denied; for it must be perceptible to every reflecting mind that, so far as reliance is placed on the scripture now before us, the peculiar dogmas of Calvinism must stand or fall with the above propositions.

And we may now be permitted in candor to say, that it will not be a difficult task to show that the above propositions resemble far more a gross perversion than a fair exposition of Scripture. This we shall endeavor to evince, by examining each proposition separately. But, first, we would frankly acknowledge that all the above propositions have not been fairly avowed by all who have been considered Calvinists; but at the same time it must be conceded, on the other hand, that so far as any of them have been renounced, all dependence for the support of Calvinism from that source has also been relinquished.

Some Calvinistic writers have based the defense of their system on one, some on another, and some on several, of the above positions; but seldom, if ever, has the same writer expressly avowed his reliance on all of them. Still it should be borne in mind, that if Calvinism can derive any support whatever from the passage in question, it must be by a reliance on some of the positions above presented; consequently, if we can show that none of them can fairly be sustained, this stronghold of Calvinistic defense will be demolished. But to proceed—

1. The position is assumed that *Pharaoh is given as an instance of unconditional and eternal reprobation, being created for the express purpose that the "power of God" might be shown in his eternal destruction.*

If this proposition can be sustained by a fair exegesis of the Scripture, then it would seem to follow that, as Pharaoh had been created expressly and designedly for eternal death, it would not be inconsistent with the divine attributes to suppose that the reprobate in general were created for the same purpose; and this, we confess, would go far toward establishing Calvinistic reprobation. What, we ask, is the evidence here relied upon? It is this sentence: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee." Now, before this passage can be made to sustain the proposition in question, it must be shown that the phrase, "I have raised thee up," implies, I have created thee; and that the phrase, "that I might show my power in thee," implies that I might eternally punish thee. That neither of these positions can be sustained, we shall immediately show.

(1) The word here rendered "raised up," is ἐξήγειρά, from ἐξεγείρω. That this word does not mean *to create*, but merely *to rouse up*, or *to excite*, or (as seems most in accordance with διετηρήθης, the word used in the Septuagint) *to make to stand*, or *to preserve*, is a point conceded

even by Macknight and Prof. Stuart. The following is the language of the latter, *in loc.:* "What, then, is the sense of ἐξεγείρω, as employed in Hellenistic Greek? In the Septuagint it is a very common word, being used some seventy times. In none of these cases does it mean *to create, to produce, to raise up*, in the sense of *bringing into being*, etc.; so that those who construe ἐξήγειρά σε, *I have created thee*, or *brought thee into existence*, do that which is contrary to the Hellenistic *usus loquendi.*"

Whitby translates the sentence thus: "I have made thee to stand." The Targum of B. Uziel: "I have kept thee alive." Macknight favors the sense of "having preserved thee" from the plagues, etc. He paraphrases the words as follows: "Even for this same purpose I have raised thee and thy people to great celebrity, and have upheld you during the former plagues, that, in punishing you, I might show my power, and that my name, as the righteous Governor of the world, might be published through all the earth."

If, in addition to the literal import of the original word, we take into consideration the connection of the passage in the ninth of Exodus, from which the apostle quotes, we may readily be convinced that there was no reference here to the *creation* of Pharaoh for a specific purpose. The allusion evidently was to the preservation and prosperity of the Egyptian king and people, and especially to their deliverance from the plagues with which they had been visited. These had not only been brought upon them by the hand of God, but the same hand was alone able to remove them. And but for the "long-suffering" of God, the king and people of Egypt must have perished under the first plagues; but God bore with them: he "made them to stand;" he preserved them for farther trial, and for a farther display of his glory. So that, without a violent and palpable perversion of the sense, there is not found the least shadow of ground for the notion that Pharaoh was here said to be *created* for a special purpose. There is nothing here said or implied on that subject whatever. Hence we discover that the first branch of this position of Calvinism, so far from being sustained, is clearly refuted. It cannot be argued from the case of Pharaoh, that the reprobate were created with the express design that they might be unconditionally destroyed; and any thing short of this, fails in sustaining the Calvinistic scheme.

(2) The second branch of the position is, that the phrase, "*that I might show my power in thee*," implies, *that I might eternally punish thee.*

This the language of the text itself contradicts. The import of the phrase, "that I might show my power in thee," is clearly inferable from what immediately follows, which is exegetical of, or consequent upon,

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what precedes. It does not follow, and that thou mightest be eternally punished; but the language is, "and that my name might be declared in all the earth." The grand design of the Almighty, then, was not a display of his power in the eternal destruction of Pharaoh, but a declaration of his own name "throughout all the earth." For the accomplishment of this "purpose" of mercy, Pharaoh and his people were raised up and preserved, as suitable instruments. And this purpose God would accomplish through them, whether they repented and submitted to his authority or not.

Had Pharaoh not hardened his heart, but yielded to the evidence of the miracles and power of the true God, he might have been the honored instrument of proclaiming, from his commanding position on the throne of Egypt, that the God of Israel was the true God, and that therefore all nations and people should honor and serve him; and in this way the "power of God might have been declared," and some knowledge of the true worship disseminated among all the Egyptians, and all the nations with whom they had intercourse. But as the king of Egypt voluntarily resisted the truth, refused to acknowledge the dominion of Jehovah, and impiously demanded, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?" God determined to show forth his power in Pharaoh, by sending plague after plague, and still affording him longer trial and additional testimony, that the fame of these wonders, and of the signal overthrow of the Egyptians, might be spread far and wide among the nations. But in all this, there is not one word, either said or implied, about Pharaoh's being created, or even "raised up," expressly that God might display his power in his eternal destruction. The design was, according to the plain declaration of Scripture, not that God "might show his power" in the eternal destruction of Pharaoh, but in the "declaring of his own name throughout all the earth." Thus we see, then, that this first position of Calvinism, in neither of its branches, finds any support in the Bible; but, on the contrary, is fairly disproved.

2. The second position of Calvinism is, *that the hardening of Pharaoh's heart was effected by a direct influence, or positive influx, from God.*

This position, on which is based the strength of the Calvinistic argument from the case of Pharaoh, has been assumed, but never has been proved. Indeed, the evidence is very plain to the contrary. There are two senses in which God may be said to harden the hearts of men; and it is probable that this took place, in both senses, with Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

(1) The first is, by sending them mercies, with the express design

that they may be melted into contrition and led to reformation; the natural consequence of which, however, will be, that if they resist these mercies, they will be left harder and more obdurate than they were before. In this sense it is that the gospel is said to be (2 Cor. ii. 16) "in them that perish, a savor of death unto death," and (Rom. ii. 4, 5) the ungodly are said to "despise the riches of the goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering" of God, and "after their hardness and impenitent hearts," to treasure up "wrath against the day of wrath." And in the same sense the Lord "endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath"—that is, he waited long with the Egyptians, and delivered and "raised them up" from many plagues, that they might see "his power," and be led to own his dominion.

(2) The second sense in which God may be said to harden the hearts of men is that of a judicial dereliction, or a righteous withholding, of his restraining grace. This takes place after men have had a fair trial been faithfully warned, and long borne with; and is not effected by any active exertion of divine power upon them, or any positive infusion of evil into them, but results necessarily from God's ceasing to send them his prophets and ministers, and withholding from them his Holy Spirit. The remarks of Macknight on this subject deserve special regard:

"If this is understood of nations, God's hardening them means his allowing them an opportunity of hardening themselves, by exercising patience and long-suffering toward them. This was the way God hardened Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Ex. vii. 3: 'I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.' For when God removed the plagues one after another, the Egyptians took occasion from that respite to harden their own hearts. So it is said, Ex. viii. 15: 'But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had said. (See Ex. viii. 32.)

"If the expression, 'whom he will he hardeneth,' is understood of individuals, it does not mean that God hardens their hearts by any positive exertions of his power upon them, but that by his not executing sentence against their evil works speedily, he allows them to go on in their wickedness, whereby they harden themselves. And when they have proceeded to a certain length, he withholds the warnings of prophets and righteous men, and even withdraws his Spirit from them, according to what he declared concerning the antediluvians, Gen. vi. 3: 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man.' The examples of Jacob and Esau, and of the Israelites and the Egyptians, are very properly appealed to by the apostle on this occasion, to show that, without injus-

tice, God might punish the Israelites for their disobedience, by casting them off, and make the believing Gentiles his people in their place."

Hence it is clearly evident that from the Scriptures we have no ground for believing that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh by a direct influence, and positive infusion, of evil; and therefore the second position of Calvinism falls to the ground.

3. The third position of the Calvinist, which we proposed examining, is that in the reference to the "parable of the potter," the making of "one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor," *is designed to represent the right of God to create one man expressly for eternal life, and another for eternal destruction.*

This position contains the very essence of the Calvinistic peculiarity. If it can be sustained, there is nothing left between Calvinism and Arminianism worthy of contention; but if it cannot be sustained, then it will follow that this hackneyed argument of the Calvinist, drawn from the parable of "the potter and the clay," is "weighed in the balances and found wanting." Now we think that it is only necessary to examine carefully the entire passage in Jeremiah, from which the apostle quotes, in order to see that it has no reference whatever to the eternal destiny of individuals.

The whole passage reads thus:—Jer. xviii. 1–10: "The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O *house of Israel*, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a *nation*, and concerning a *kingdom*, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a *nation*, and concerning a *kingdom*, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." In regard to this parable, we may observe—

(1) It has no reference to the *creation of individual persons*, but to God's sovereign dominion over nations or kingdoms. God does not say, "at what time I shall speak concerning" an individual person; but "concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom."

(2) It has no reference to the *eternal destiny of men;* but to the overthrow or prosperity of kingdoms in this world. The language is, "to pull down and to destroy"—that is, to overturn the polity, or destroy the power, of a nation as such; or "to build and to plant"—that is, to establish, strengthen, and prosper, an earthly kingdom.

(3) This calamity and prosperity are not presented as the result of the mere arbitrary will of God, absolute and unconditional, but it is clearly expressed that they are *conditional*—subject to be influenced by the conduct of the nations referred to.

(4) It is not intimated that the potter made even the "vessel unto dishonor," *expressly to destroy it.* The reverse of this is most certainly true. Although all vessels are not designed for a purpose of equal honor or importance, yet none are formed merely to be "dashed in pieces."

(5) The potter did not change his design in making the vessel, so as to form it "another vessel," which we may suppose to be a "vessel unto dishonor," till it first "was marred" in his hand. It failed to answer his first intention.

(6) This whole parable was designed to express God's sovereign right to deal with the Jews as seemed good in his sight. Not to prosper or destroy them according to an arbitrary will; but to govern them according to the fixed principles of his righteous administration. To permit them to be carried into captivity, when they became wicked and rebellious, and to restore them to their own land and to their former prosperity when they repented.

(7) As this parable was originally used to justify the dealings of God in reference to the Jewish nation in the days of Jeremiah, so it was strikingly illustrative of the justice of God in destroying the idolatrous Pharaoh and the Egyptians after having long borne with them, and it was also well adapted to show the propriety of God's rejecting the unbelieving Jews from being his Church, and receiving into its pale the believing Gentiles, in the apostle's day; and this was the very subject which the apostle was considering. From all this, we arrive at the conclusion that, so far from this parable being designed to teach an unconditional and absolute election and reprobation of individuals to eternal life and eternal death, it is only intended to exhibit a conditional election and reprobation of nations, in reference to the present world. And thus we perceive that this third position of Calvinism, in reference to the subject before us, is plainly contradicted by the Scriptures.

4. The fourth position of Calvinism which we proposed to consider is, that the "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," *are designed to repro*

sent persons expressly and designedly created and prepared by the Almighty for eternal death.

The comment of Calvinists generally on this subject is, that God not only determined from all eternity to sentence a portion of mankind to eternal death, but that he preördained the means as well as the end. Hence those who by the decree of God are designed for eternal death, are, by the same decree inevitably operating in their case, "fitted," or prepared, for their unalterable and unavoidable destiny.

The manner in which many Calvinists speak in reference to this dark feature of their system is a little curious. Some, like the bold and independent Calvin himself, look it full in the face, and frankly confess that "it is a horrible decree," whilst others conduct themselves warily, and neither directly avow, nor plainly deny, the consequences of their doctrine; but at the same time indirectly evince that even in this matter they are Calvinists still.

The controversy in reference to the phrase, "fitted to destruction, regards the agency by which this is effected. On this passage, Prof. Stuart remarks: "Now, whether they came to be fitted merely by their own act, or whether there was some agency on the part of God which brought them to be fitted, the text of itself does not here declare. But in our text how can we avoid comparing *κατηρτισμένα*, in verse 22, with *ἃ προητοίμασε*, in verse 23? The two verses are counterparts and antithetic; and accordingly we have *σκεύη ὀργῆς*, to which *σκεύη ἐλέους* corresponds, and so *εἰς ἀπώλειαν* and *εἰς δόξαν*. How can we help concluding, then, that *κατηρτισμένα* and *ἃ προητοίμασε* correspond in the way of antithesis?"

Although there is here apparent some reserve in the mode of expression, yet the clear inference is, that according to Prof. Stuart, there is a perfect antithesis between the "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," in the 22d verse, and "the vessels of mercy prepared unto glory," in the 23d verse; and that God exercised a similar agency in both cases—that is, that God not only directly prepares his people for eternal life, but that he directly fitteth the wicked for eternal death.

We may suppose, however, that if the learned Professor had not felt some concern for the cause of Calvinism, he might have told us that it is not necessary in every case where antithesis is used, that the figure should be applied to every part of the subject. There may be antithesis between the "vessels of wrath" and the "vessels of mercy;" but it does not follow that both must have been fitted, or prepared, in the same way. Indeed, the very opposite of this is fairly inferable from the language itself. The "vessels of mercy" are said to have been "afore

prepared unto glory" by the Lord; but the "vessels of wrath" are merely said to be "fitted unto destruction." It is not said by whom. Hence the plain inference is, that as God is expressly said to be the agent in preparing "the vessels of mercy," had he also been the agent in fitting the "vessels of wrath," a similar form of speech would have been used in both cases. To suppose that God exercises a direct agency in "fitting" men for destruction, is contrary to the scope of this passage, which declares that he "endured with much long-suffering" these "vessels of wrath;" and also at war with the general tenor of Scripture, which, in the language of Mr. Fletcher, represents "salvation to be of God, and damnation to be of ourselves." Hence we find that this fourth position of Calvinism is contrary to the Scriptures.

5. The last position of the Calvinist which we proposed to consider is, that the object of the apostle, in referring to the case of Pharaoh and to the parable of the potter and the clay, *was to illustrate the doctrine of personal, unconditional, and eternal election and reprobation.*

That the apostle had quite a different object in view, we think is plain from the whole connection. It was *national* and not *personal* election and reprobation of which he was speaking. This is evident from the 24th verse of the chapter which we have been considering: "Even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." The object of the apostle was to silence the objecting Jew, and to justify the divine procedure in the establishing of the gospel Church, of believers, whether Jews or Gentiles. Hence it is plain that the entire argument of the Calvinist, for personal and unconditional election and reprobation, from the Epistle to the Romans, is founded on a misapplication of the whole subject—applying what is said of nations to individuals, and what is said in reference to time to eternity.

The apostle continues the discussion of this national election throughout the tenth and eleventh chapters; but to follow him farther we deem unnecessary, as the principles already presented and established will sufficiently illustrate the whole subject. We thought it only necessary to examine the passage mainly relied upon by the Calvinist; and the result is, that we find therein no support for Calvinistic election and reprobation.

III. The third and last Scripture argument relied upon by the Calvinist, which we shall here notice, is founded upon *what is said in reference to predestination*, etc., in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the eighth chapter to the Romans.

The passages read as follows:—Eph. i. 4, 5, 11, 12: "According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we

should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. . . . . In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." Rom. viii. 28–30: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Perhaps no word in the whole range of theology has given rise to a greater degree of intricate speculation and ardent controversy than the word *predestinate*, which occurs in the above passages. The words here rendered "did predestinate," and, "having predestinated," in the Greek Testament, are προώρισε and προορίσας, and are derived from πρό, before, and ὁρίζω, I define, finish, bound, or terminate. Hence we have the English word horizon, from ὅρος, a boundary, or limit. The literal import of predestinate is therefore to *define*, *describe*, *limit*, or *fix the boundaries beforehand*.

In the language of Calvinists, *predestination* is a term of more extensive import than *election*. By the latter, they understand the divine selection from all eternity of a portion of mankind for eternal life; by the former, they understand not only the predetermination of the elect for eternal life, but also the preördaining of the reprobate to eternal death; and in a still wider sense, they understand it to mean God's eternal decree, by which he "hath foreördained whatsoever comes to pass."

The Arminians, although they discard predestination in the absolute and unconditional sense of the Calvinists, yet acknowledge that there is a sense in which it is a true doctrine of revelation.

1. They understand by predestination, *the divine predetermination in reference to nations*. Thus they hold that the Jews were predestinated to be the Church of God, under the Old Testament dispensation, and that, under the gospel, it was predestinated that the Church should consist of both Jews and Gentiles, admitted on the condition of faith.

2. By predestination, they understand *the divine predetermination to save the believing character, as declared in the gospel.*

3. By predestination, they understand *the divine predetermination to*

save all persons who will believe the gospel, upon the condition of persevering faith.

Here, then, are three different senses in which Arminians admit that predestination may scripturally be understood. The first relates to *nations*, or bodies of people; the second relates to certain *characters;* and the third relates to *individuals conditionally.* As the last is the only view of the subject in which the eternal destiny of individual persons is embraced, and as that is conditional, it follows that predestination, in any of these acceptations, is essentially variant from the Calvinistic theory.

The three essential attributes of Calvinistic predestination are, 1. That it relate to *individual persons.* 2. That it be *unconditional*—not dependent on the foresight of faith and obedience, or unbelief and disobedience. 3. That it relate to the *eternal destiny of men.*

Now it will be perceived that all these attributes meet in no one of the views presented as held by Arminians. National predestination, and that which relates to certain characters, may be unconditional; but here the eternal destiny of individuals is not fixed. Personal predestination, which alone fixes the destiny of individuals, is always understood by the Arminian as being *conditional*—founded upon the divine prescience, which fully contemplates and strictly regards the condition of faith and good works, as presented in the gospel.

We will now inquire, briefly, whether the Calvinistic or the Arminian view of this subject accords with the above quoted scriptures.

1. We notice the passage in Ephesians. This Dr. Macknight, a Calvinist, acknowledges is a national predestination, (though he still contends for a higher meaning.) And that it refers especially to the calling of the Gentiles to the fellowship of the gospel, is evident from the entire scope of the Epistle. In continuation of the same subject, the apostle proceeds, and in the third chapter speaks of the "mystery" that was "made known to him by revelation," and this he defines to be "that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel;" and he adds that this is "according to the eternal purpose which he (God) purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Here, then, is the plain comment by the apostle himself, on the import of the "predestination," and "the mystery of God's will," according to his good pleasure, purposed in himself, which were spoken of in the first chapter. If it still be contended, as Macknight thinks it should, that there is a reference here to personal predestination to eternal life, the fact is not denied; although the national predestination of the Gentiles is the point directly referred to

by the apostle, yet this always contemplated, and was designed to promote, the eternal salvation of individuals. But the moment we contemplate it as personal predestination to eternal life, it becomes conditional. The Gentiles were only embraced in this sense as they became believers, and upon the condition of their faith. This is plain from the 12th and 13th verses of the first chapter: "That we should be to the praise of his glory who *first trusted in Christ.* In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth." So we perceive that in no sense in which the subject can be viewed, is any countenance here given to the Calvinistic version of predestination.

2. Equally difficult will it be found to construe the passage in the eighth chapter to the Romans, according to Calvinistic principles.

Arminians have differed somewhat in the construction of this passage. Dr. Clarke seems to confine it to the national call of the Gentiles to gospel fellowship: in this, he followed the comment of Dr. Taylor. But Mr. Watson thinks personal election to eternal life is here embraced. We think that both national and personal predestination are included. 1. The Gentiles, as a people, because God foreknew that they would believe and embrace the gospel, were predestinated to the enjoyment of its privileges. 2. Genuine and persevering believers, because God foreknew them as such, were predestinated to be "conformed to the image of his Son." They were "called, justified, and glorified." But all this was conducted according to the regular gospel plan. Their predestination was founded upon the foreknowledge of God, which contemplated them as complying with the condition of faith as laid down in the gospel. Here, then, we can see no ground at all for the Calvinistic notion of absolute and unconditional election or predestination to eternal life, irrespective of faith or good works.

We have now briefly examined those texts which have ever been considered as the strongholds of Calvinism, and think we have clearly shown that they are susceptible of a different and much more consistent interpretation. There are other passages which they frequently urge in support of their doctrine; but we deem it useless to detain longer. We have selected the principal and most difficult; and from the solutions already furnished, the proper explanation of others will be readily presented, in perfect consistency with a *possible salvation for all mankind*

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXIII.

QUESTION 1. Upon what scripture do the Calvinists found their *first* argument which is here noticed?

2. What commentators are named as having refuted the Calvinistic construction of this passage?

3. What Calvinistic commentators are named as having favored the Arminian construction?

4. Upon what two positions is the Calvinistic argument here dependent?

5. How is it proved that this election and reprobation did not refer to Jacob and Esau *personally*?

6. How does it appear that it did not refer to the *eternal destiny* of those concerned?

7. Upon what passage is the *second* Calvinistic argument here noticed, founded?

8. What are the several positions here presented as essential to sustain the Calvinistic argument from this passage?

9. How is the first position disproved?

10. How the second?

11. The third?

12. The fourth?

13. The fifth?

14. Upon what is founded the *third* Calvinistic argument here noticed?

15. What is the literal meaning of *predestinate*?

16. In what sense do Calvinists understand this doctrine?

17. How is it understood by Arminians?

18. What is the essential difference between *Calvinistic* and *Arminian* predestination?

19. How is it shown that the texts quoted accord with the Arminian theory?

20. Have Arminians all agreed in their explanation of the passage quoted from Rom. viii.?

21. What is the probable meaning of that passage?

22. Are there any other passages appealed to by Calvinists?

23. Are they more difficult than the ones selected?

24. Upon what principle may they be explained?

CHAPTER XXIV.

CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM COMPARED.

HAVING progressed so far in the investigation of the extent of the atonement as, first, to consider the Scripture testimony in favor of the Arminian view, and, secondly, to examine some of the principal Scripture proofs relied upon by Calvinists for the establishment of their system, we now proceed to institute a comparison between Calvinism and Arminianism, by an examination of the *leading difficulties* with which each of these systems has been said, by the opposite party, to be encumbered.

I. We will notice the principal objections which Calvinists have alleged against the system of Arminianism. The following are all that we deem worthy of consideration:

1. Calvinists allege that *Arminianism is contrary to fact.*
2. *That it is contrary to grace.*
3. *That it is inconsistent with the divine sovereignty.*

These difficulties we will present in the language of Dr. Hill, as follows:

"1. It does not appear agreeable to fact that there is an administration of the means of grace sufficient to bring all men to faith and repentance.

"2. The second difficulty under which the Arminian system labors is this, that while in words it ascribes all to the grace of God, it does in effect resolve our salvation into something independent of that grace.

"3. This system seems to imply a failure in the purpose of the Almighty, which is not easily reconciled with our notions of his sovereignty."

The three difficulties above specified are more fully expressed by the same author in another place, as follows:

"1. It is not easy to reconcile the infinite diversity of situations, and the very unfavorable circumstances, in which many nations, and some individuals of all nations, are placed, with one fundamental position of

the Arminian system, that to all men there are administered means sufficient to bring them to salvation.

"2. It is not easy to reconcile those views of the degeneracy of human nature, and those lessons of humility and self-abasement in the sight of God, which both Scripture and reason inculcate, with another fundamental position of that system, that the faith and good works of those who are elected did not flow from their election, but were foreseen by God as the grounds of it.

"3. It is not easy to reconcile the immutability and efficacy of the divine counsel, which enter into our conceptions of the First Cause, with a purpose to save all, suspended upon a condition which is not fulfilled with regard to many." (Hill's Lectures, Chap. ix., Sec. 1, and Chap. vii., Sec. 4.)

We know of no difficulty urged by Calvinists, as involved in the Arminian view of the extent of the atonement, meriting a serious reply, which may not properly be embraced under one or the other of the preceding divisions. The difficulties above described, it must be confessed, are of so grave a character, that a clear demonstration of their real existence must be a sufficient refutation of the system to which they adhere. The system of revealed truth is perfectly consistent throughout, and completely harmonious with the correct view of the divine attributes. If, then, it can be satisfactorily shown that the Arminian system really labors under any one of the above difficulties, however plausible the argument for its support may have appeared, we shall be compelled to renounce it; but we think a close examination of the subject will evince that the objections named by Dr. Hill are entirely groundless. We will examine them separately.

1. The first alleges that the Arminian system is *contrary to fact.*

The great distinguishing feature of Arminianism, as has been exhibited in the preceding chapters, is a belief in the truth of the following position: that the atonement of Christ so extends to all men as to render their salvation attainable. That this is inconsistent with fact, is argued by the Calvinist, both from the supposed *destitution of the means of grace in heathen lands*, and from *the great inequality in the distribution of those means in those countries where the gospel is published.*

(1) First, we will consider the subject in reference to *the case of the heathen.*

We think it must be clear that the objection to a possible salvation for all men, as deduced from the condition of the heathen, can only be sustained upon the supposition that the destitution of their condition is

such as to render their salvation utterly impossible. Hence Calvinists have generally, so far as they have expressed an opinion upon this subject at all, consigned the entire mass of the heathen world to inevitable destruction. That this bold stand is assumed by all Calvinists, cannot be affirmed; for many of them hesitate to express any opinion on the subject, and others clearly intimate that there may be, even among the heathen, some elect individuals, upon whose hearts divine grace may, in some incomprehensible manner, so operate as effectually to call and prepare them for glory. But then it must be plain that such as assume this ground can charge upon the system of Arminianism no inconsistency with fact, in relation to the heathen, that does not pertain equally to their own system.

As, therefore, the objection itself rests upon the assumed position that the heathen are necessarily precluded from the possibility of salvation, it is an obvious begging of the question. The very position upon which it depends for all its force, is what is denied, and ought first to be proved. But what entirely destroys the objection is, that this position never has been, and never can be, proved. In relation to the heathen, we may freely admit, 1. That their privileges are far inferior to those conferred upon nations favored with the light of the gospel. 2. That this national distinction is fairly attributable to divine sovereignty, which, for wise and inscrutable reasons, may dispense peculiar blessings, in an unequal degree, to different nations and communities, and even to different individuals.

But the great question is, Does it follow, from this inequality in the distribution of privilege, that the least favored are entirely destitute of a sufficiency of grace to render their salvation possible? This none can with safety affirm. In reference even to the heathen, the Scriptures declare that God "left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave" them "rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling" their "hearts with food and gladness." Acts xiv. 17.

And again, in the first chapter to the Romans, St. Paul informs us, in reference to the heathen, that "that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." And in Romans ii. we read: "For there is no respect of persons with God. . . . For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their

conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another."

In the first chapter of St. John, Christ is said to be "the true Light, which lighteth *every man that cometh into the world.*" And St. Peter declares, Acts x. 34, 35, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in *every nation* he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Thus we clearly see that, according to the Scriptures, the heathen themselves are not left destitute of a possibility of salvation.

But the Calvinist may rejoin that, notwithstanding the Scriptures show forth a possible salvation for the heathen, this does not reconcile the facts in their case with the principles of Arminianism; for still it must be admitted that they are far less favored, in point of privilege, than Christian nations. To this we reply, that it follows, at least, from the possibility of salvation to the heathen, that the objection under consideration falls to the ground; for it rests for its support on the assumed position "that it does not appear agreeable to fact that there is an administration of the means of grace sufficient to bring all men to faith and repentance." The point upon which the objection stands or falls, is not the *equality* or *inequality* in the means of grace, but the sufficiency or insufficiency of those means *to result in salvation.* That such a sufficiency of the means of grace extends to the heathen, we have seen from the Scriptures. Hence the assumed fact by which the Calvinist would involve the Arminian system in difficulty, is shown to be contrary to Scripture.

But if we confine ourselves to the bare inequality in the distribution of the means of grace, Calvinism, as well as Arminianism, is compelled to admit this inequality, even in reference to the elect; for it is undeniable that some of them are much more highly favored than others. If, then, a bare inequality in the distribution of the means of grace is evidence that God does not intend the salvation of the less favored, it would follow that, according to Calvinism, he does not intend the salvation of some of the elect! But if Calvinism did not recognize this inequality, it could involve the Arminian in no difficulty for which he is not furnished with a scriptural solution.

The Bible illustration of the subject is, that God will require of men according to what they have, and not according to what they have not. If to the heathen only "one talent" has been disbursed, the improvement of "five" will never be required at their hands. It matters not, so far as the supposed difficulty now under consideration is concerned, whether the means of grace extended to the heathen be explained to

mean the teachings of tradition, the light of nature, or the secret influence of the Spirit; or whether all these are thought to be connected. Nor does it at all matter how great or how small the degree of faith, or what the character of the obedience essential to the salvation of a heathen. These are questions which cannot affect the point in hand. That the heathen cannot believe the gospel in the same sense, and to the same extent, as Christians, may readily be admitted; but this cannot affect the question concerning the possibility of their salvation, unless it first be proved that the same is required of them, which is a position alike repugnant to reason and to Scripture. We hence conclude that, so far as the case of the heathen is concerned, there is no evidence that Arminianism is *inconsistent with fact.*

(2) But Dr. Hill also urges this objection from "the very unequal circumstances in which the inhabitants of different Christian countries are placed."

Some have the gospel in greater purity than others, and, in many respects, are more highly favored. Perhaps it is a sufficient reply to this objection to say, that it bears with equal force upon Calvinism. Indeed, it is a little surprising that it did not occur to the learned author above quoted, that this same *inequality*, which he here adduces as a fact to disprove a possible salvation for all men, would, upon the same principle, prove far more than he would desire: it would prove the impossibility of the salvation of some of the *elect.*

If this inequality of circumstances, in reference to different Christian countries, and different individuals in the same country, were invariably found to preponderate in favor of the Calvinistically elect, there might seem more propriety in the objection; but such is evidently not the case. Will the Calvinists affirm that all the elect of God are found in those portions of Christendom which are favored with the gospel in its greatest purity? Or will they pretend that the electing grace of God always searches out the most highly privileged individuals in the same community? Surely not. It is admitted that while many in the most highly favored countries, and of the most highly favored individuals, in point of external privilege, live and die reprobate sinners, there are to be found in the darkest corners of Christendom, and among the least distinguished individuals in point of external privilege, some of the faithful elect children of God.

If, then, this inferiority in point of privilege, which applies to some of the elect when compared with their more highly distinguished brethren, argues nothing against the possibility of the salvation of all the elect, by what mode of reasoning is it that a similar

inequality amongst mankind, or Christian nations in general, is appealed to as a fact inconsistent with a possibility of salvation for all men? That the inequality appealed to by Dr. Hill is precisely the same when applied to the elect people of God as when applied to mankind in general, is so obvious a truth that it is astonishing that a discerning mind should glance at the subject without perceiving it; and, when perceived, it is still more astonishing that this inequality of circumstances should be cited as one of the peculiar difficulties of Arminianism.

(3) Dr. Hill next argues that Arminianism is irreconcilable with the fact, "that amongst those to whom the gospel is preached, and in whose circumstances there is not that kind of diversity which can account for the difference, some believe, and some do not believe."

This diversity, Calvinists infer, results entirely from "an inward discriminating grace." But this we view as a gratuitous assumption, not countenanced by Scripture; while the Arminian method of accounting for the faith of some, and the unbelief of others, by reference to their own free agency, and making the unbelief of the one result entirely from the *willful rejection* of a sufficient degree of grace to result in saving faith, presents a solution of the difficulty at once satisfactory, and consistent with the general tenor of the gospel.

2. Arminianism is said to be *contrary to grace.*

Dr. Hill's words are: "The second difficulty under which the Arminian system labors is this: that while in words it ascribes all to the grace of God, it does in effect resolve our salvation into something independent of that grace."

From the days of Calvin to the present time, the term *grace* has been pronounced with a peculiar emphasis, and dwelt upon as a hobby, by those who have borne the name of Calvinists. They have designated their own peculiar views of predestination, election, divine sovereignty, etc., by the imposing title of "doctrines of grace;" and all who have differed from them on this subject have been characterized, by them at least, as enemies of salvation *by grace*, and abettors of salvation *by works*. But that the "doctrines of grace," scripturally understood, belong peculiarly to Calvinism, is a position which Arminians have always denied, while they have disavowed most strenuously the doctrine of salvation by works. Indeed, none who acknowledge the Bible as their standard can deny the position, that salvation is of grace, and not of works. The important point is, to ascertain the Bible import of the doctrines of grace, and to determine the sense in which salvation is not of works, but of grace.

If the system of Arminianism really involve the inconsistency imputed to it in the above-named objection, it cannot be true. The objection represents that, "while in words it ascribes all to the grace of God, it does in effect resolve our salvation into something independent of that grace." Now it is clear that our salvation cannot be all ascribed to grace, and at the same time, and in the same sense, be all ascribed to, or "resolved into, something independent of that grace," without a manifest contradiction.

If it be meant that Arminianism plainly contradicts itself, by representing salvation to be, at the same time and in the same sense, *in words*, of grace, and *in effect*, of something else, it should be shown in what sense it is represented to be of grace, and that, in the same sense, it is represented to be of something else; and then the inconsistency would be fairly proved upon the system itself; but this Dr. Hill has not attempted to do. We are therefore induced to believe that we are not to infer from the objection, that one part of Arminianism is inconsistent with another part of the same system, but only that it is inconsistent with Calvinism. Unless the premises in the objection, as stated by Dr. Hill, are utterly false and good for nothing, we must understand the language to imply, that while Arminianism ascribes salvation to *grace*, in the Arminian acceptation of the term, in the Calvinistic sense, it ascribes it to *something else*. Then the only controversy will be, whether the Calvinistic or the Arminian view of the sense in which salvation is of grace, is in accordance with the Scriptures.

That salvation is of grace, in the sense in which that term may be explained by Calvinists, is perhaps more than Arminians can admit, either in *words* or in *effect*. For if by salvation of grace, Calvinists understand that faith and obedience have no connection whatever with salvation, either as conditions or otherwise, this view of salvation by grace must be rejected by Arminians, as directly contradictory to the Scriptures. And this, we are persuaded, is the sense in which salvation by grace is understood, when it is said that the Arminian system does, in effect, deny it. If the Scriptures are true, salvation cannot be of grace, in such sense as to be entirely irrespective of repentance and faith, and to supersede the necessity of good works.

The plain difference between Calvinism and Arminianism, on this subject, is this: Calvinists cannot see how salvation can be entirely of grace, if it have any respect to faith, or any thing else, as a *condition;* whereas Arminians, while they understand that "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," are indispensable conditions of salvation with all to whom the gospel is addressed, understand, at

the same time, that salvation itself is entirely, from beginning to end, a work of God through grace.

If it still be insisted that salvation cannot be ascribed to grace, if it be suspended upon a condition, then the charge of inconsistency or heterodoxy must be made upon the Bible itself; for nothing can be plainer than that God has promised to save the believer upon the condition of faith, and threatened to punish the unbeliever in consequence of his unbelief and voluntary rejection of the gospel. Notwithstanding salvation is thus suspended upon conditions, and, in a certain sense, man, by his own agency, must determine his eternal destiny, yet it may easily be shown that salvation itself is all the work of God through grace.

(1) Man is by nature utterly helpless, incapable of any good whatever, only as he is visited and strengthened by divine grace.

(2) It is attributable to grace alone that a plan of mercy has been devised and proposed to man.

(3) Nothing that man can do can avail any thing toward purchasing salvation by merit; for "when we have done all that we can do, we are unprofitable servants."

(4) The work of salvation, in all its stages, can be performed, either in whole or in part, by none but God; and this is entirely a work of grace, for none can claim it at the hand of God as a matter of right, and it is of his mere grace that God has promised to save the sinner, according to the plan of his own devising.

This subject may be illustrated by a reference to the case of the man with the "withered hand." He had no strength to lift his hand, yet, in his effort to obey the command, strength was imparted. Now, none can certainly say that, if he had refused to obey the command, his hand would have been restored, and yet how absurd would it have been for him to boast that his cure was of himself, merely because the Saviour saw proper to effect the work in a certain way, and the man received the benefit in accordance with that plan! Even so, if God see proper to save one man and to damn another, under the dispensation of his gospel, it will be because the one accepted and the other rejected the gospel message; and still the work of salvation will be a work of God through grace. Thus we think it clear that there is no just ground to impugn the Arminian system as being inconsistent with *the doctrines of grace.*

3. The last difficulty alleged against the Arminian system is, "*that it proceeds upon the supposition of a failure of the purpose of the Almighty,*" *which is irreconcilable with the divine sovereignty.*

That God is an independent sovereign, and governs the material and moral universe according to his will, is a truth so fully developed in Scripture, and so conformable to our best conceptions of the divine character, that no system of divinity which denies it can be admitted as true. Calvinists have generally represented Arminians as denying the divine sovereignty; but Arminians, so far from acknowledging that they deny this doctrine, have ever contended that their system recognizes it in a more scriptural and consistent acceptation than the Calvinistic theory admits. That Arminianism is inconsistent with the Calvinistic presentation of that doctrine, will not be denied; but the question is, Can the Arminian system be reconciled with the correct and scriptural view of the subject? We think it can.

The point in reference to which Dr. Hill alleges that Arminianism is inconsistent with the sovereignty of God, is that, according to the Arminian system, the will of God is absolutely defeated; for in that system it is declared that God wills the salvation of all men; but if, as Arminians admit, all men are not saved, then, according to the objection, the divine will is defeated, and the sovereign dominion of God is overthrown. This difficulty, which, indeed, at first view, wears a formidable aspect, upon a closer examination will be seen to originate entirely in a misunderstanding of the import of the term *will;* or, rather, from the use of the term in two different senses.

For illustration of these two acceptations of the *will*, the one may be termed the *primary*, or *antecedent*, will of God, and the other his *ultimate* will. The primary, or antecedent, will of God contemplates and recognizes the contingencies necessarily connected with the actions of free moral agents; but the ultimate will of God is absolute and unencumbered by any conditions whatever. Thus it is the primary, or antecedent, will of God that *all men should be saved*, but it is the ultimate will of God that none shall be saved but *those who comply with the conditions of salvation.*

The question will here be asked, Has then God *two* wills, the one inconsistent with the other? We reply, No: there is really but one will, contemplated in two different points of view; and the terms *antecedent* and *ultimate* are merely used for the convenience of describing two different, but perfectly consistent, aspects of the same will, under different circumstances.

This may be familiarly illustrated by the analogy of parental government. The father prescribes a law for his children, and threatens chastisement to all who disobey. Now it is very clear that the affectionate father does not *primarily* will that any of his children should

suffer chastisement. It is his desire that all should obey, and escape punishment. But some of them disobey: the will of the father is that they be chastised according to his threatening. This is necessary in order to the maintenance of his authority. But we demand, Has any change really taken place in the will of the father? Surely not. Is not his *ultimate* will, which orders the punishment, perfectly consistent with his *primary* will, which desired not the punishment of any? Or, rather, is it not the same will, under a different modification?

The perfect consistency, or, more strictly, the identity, of the primary and ultimate will, may be clearly seen by adverting to the conditionality of the primary will, necessarily resulting from the principles of government suited to moral agents. Thus the father primarily willed that none of his children should be punished. This is his first desire, flowing from the benevolence of his nature. But he does not will this absolutely and unconditionally. He only wills it *conditionally*—that is, he wills that they should escape punishment only in a certain way—by obeying his law; but if they violate his law, his will is that they conse quently be punished.

Let it be remembered, also, that the primary will or desire of the parent is not in the least weakened by the strength of his apprehension that some of his children will, in the abuse of their agency, disobey, and incur the penalty. Indeed, if the mind of the father should fix upon one more refractory than the rest, his affection would naturally desire more ardently the obedience, and consequent escape, of that child. Now it must be confessed that the affection of an earthly parent, though exceedingly ardent, is but a faint representation of the extent of the love and compassion of God for all his intelligent creatures. But yet the illustration thus presented may aptly serve the purpose for which we have used it.

The *primary* will of God is that all men should be saved. This he has most solemnly declared, and the benevolence of his holy nature requires it. But he does not thus will *absolutely* and *unconditionally*. He only wills it according to certain conditions, and in consistency with the plan of his own devising. He wills their salvation, not as stocks or stones, but as moral agents. He wills their salvation through the use of the prescribed means; but if, in the abuse of their agency, they reject the gospel, his *ultimate will is that they perish for their sins.* This is essential to the maintenance of his moral government over his creatures.

Thus we may clearly see how the Almighty can, according to the system of Arminianism, primarily will the salvation of all men, and through the atonement of Christ render it attainable, and yet maintain

his absolute sovereignty over the moral universe. But it is not the sovereignty of an arbitrary tyrant, nor yet such a sovereignty as that by which he rules the material universe, according to principles of absolute and fatal necessity, but the sovereignty of a righteous and benevolent Governor of moral and intelligent agents, according to holy and gracious principles. If this be the sovereignty for which Dr. Hill and the Calvinists contend, they can find nothing in the system of Arminianism inconsistent therewith; but a sovereignty variant from this would not only be inconsistent with Arminianism, but it would be repugnant to Scripture, and derogatory to the divine character.

We have now briefly considered the three leading difficulties under which, according to Calvinists, the Arminian system labors; and we think we have shown that they are all susceptible of a rational and satisfactory solution.

II. We shall now briefly sketch some of *the principal*, and, as we think, *unanswerable objections to the Calvinistic system.*

That we may more clearly perceive the force of these objections, it will be necessary to keep still in view the great distinguishing principle in the Calvinistic system, viz.: *That salvation is not made possible to all mankind; and that this impossibility depends not upon the divine foresight of the conduct of men, but upon the eternal decree and inscrutable will of God.*

That this is a correct presentation of the Calvinistic scheme, has been abundantly shown in the preceding chapters. But we think that, notwithstanding the number of learned and pious divines who have exerted their utmost ability and zeal in the support of the above system, they have never succeeded in extricating it from the following weighty objections:

1. *It is contrary to the prima facie evidence and general tenor of Scripture.* This has been shown—

(1) By appealing to those numerous and plain declarations of Scripture, in which, in speaking of the atonement, or of the death of Christ, terms of the widest possible import are used—such as *all, all the world, all mankind, the whole world*, etc.

(2) By appealing to those passages which place in direct contrast Adam, and the extent of the effects of his fall, with Christ, and the extent of the effects of his death.

(3) By appealing to those passages which teach that Christ died for such as do, or may, perish.

(4) By referring to those plain declarations which authorize the preaching of the gospel to all men, and require all men to repent and believe.

(5) By appealing to those passages which unreservedly offer salvation to *all men*, and declare that men's failure to obtain it is their own fault.

(6) By referring to those passages which teach the possibility of final apostasy, and warn Christians of their danger of it.

This is only an index of the classes of texts with which the Scriptures are replete upon this subject. Considering their great number, and plain and pointed character, it is clear that they present a *prima facie* evidence in opposition to Calvinism little less than irresistible to the unsophisticated mind. With such a mass of plain Scripture, the most natural and common-sense interpretation of which is against them, Calvinists have ever been trammeled, and have based the defense of their system mostly on philosophic speculation and abstract theoretic reasoning.

2. *The Calvinistic system is irreconcilable with the character of man as a free moral agent.*

This characteristic of our nature has been already considered. At present, we assume it as one among the most plain and undeniable truths of philosophy and religion. Calvinists have generally admitted that to reconcile their views of the eternal and absolute decrees of election and reprobation with the free agency of man, is a task too difficult for their finite powers. Hence they have seldom attempted it. Their course on this subject has not been uniform. While some have boldly repudiated the doctrine of man's free agency, and therein battled against common sense itself, the greater portion have contended that the doctrines of the eternal and unconditional decrees, and of man's free agency, though to human comprehension irreconcilable, are nevertheless both true; and they have referred the solution of the difficulty to the revelations of eternity!

If, indeed, the difficulty now before us belonged legitimately to that class of Bible truths which are too profound for human wisdom to fathom, a reference to the developments of eternity would certainly be an appropriate disposition of the subject. But when we consider the true character of the difficulty in question, it may well be doubted whether such a reference has any thing to justify or recommend it, except that it is an easy method of dismissing a troublesome difficulty. What would we say of the individual who would pretend to believe that light and darkness are both the same, and refer to eternity for their reconciliation? Or what would we think of him who should profess to believe in both the following propositions, viz., 1. Man is accountable to God: 2. Man is not accountable to God: or in any two positions

plainly contradictory to each other, and refer to the revelations of eternity for their reconciliation? We think very few would tamely accede to an opponent the right to dispose of such difficulties by that summary and easy process. And with just as little propriety can the Calvinist refer to eternity for the reconciliation of his system with the free agency of man.

The doctrines of the eternal and absolute decrees of Calvinism, and the free agency of man, are plainly and directly contradictory; and although their reconciliation is a task too difficult for finite minds, yet a limited capacity may clearly perceive that, in their very nature, they are *absolutely irreconcilable.* Nothing can be plainer than that, if all the actions of men are absolutely and unconditionally decreed from all eternity, it is impossible for man to act otherwise than he does. And if man is *necessarily* determined to act precisely as he does, he cannot be free to act differently; and if so, he cannot be a free agent. It will avail nothing to say that man may act according to his own will, or inclination; for if the will be *necessarily determined*, man can be no more free, though he may act in accordance with that necessary determination, than a falling stone, which moves in accordance with the necessary laws of gravity. As the doctrine of free agency has been fully discussed in former chapters, we will now dismiss this subject by the single remark, that when two propositions directly antagonistic to each other can be harmonized, then, and not till then, may Calvinism and man's free agency be reconciled.

3. *The Calvinistic system is inconsistent with the love, or benevolence, of God.*

"God is love." "He is loving to *every man;* and his tender mercies are over *all his works.*" It is the nature of the feeling of love to seek the happiness of the object beloved; and if God loves all men, as the Scriptures declare, he will, in his administration toward them, seek to promote their happiness, as far as it can be done consistently with his own perfections and with the character of man. But if one part of mankind have been "passed by" in the covenant of redemption, and doomed to inevitable destruction, when another portion, equally undeserving, have been selected as the favorites of Heaven, and set apart to eternal happiness, and this distinction, as Calvinists say, is founded upon the sovereign will of God alone, no reason can be assigned for the salvation of the elect, that did not equally exist in reference to the reprobate, unless it be that God *willed arbitrarily* the salvation of the former, but *did not will* the salvation of the latter. In willing the salvation of the elect, he necessarily willed their happiness, and in willing

the damnation of the reprobate, he necessarily willed their misery. Hence it follows that he loved the former, but did not love the latter; and the position that "God is loving to every man," must be discarded, or Calvinism must be renounced. Thus it is manifest that the Calvinistic system is irreconcilable with the love, or benevolence, of God.

4. *The Calvinistic scheme is inconsistent with the justice of God.*

No just government can punish an individual for doing what he never had the power to avoid. Such conduct would be universally execrated as the basest of tyranny. But, according to Calvinism, it is impossible for any man to act differently from what he does. The reprobate never had it in their power to embrace the gospel, or to avoid sinning; therefore, if they are punished for the rejection of the gospel and the commission of sin, they are punished for doing what they never had the power to avoid; and such punishment is not in accordance with justice, but is an infliction of tyranny. Hence it is clear that Calvinism is irreconcilable with the justice of God.

5. *The Calvinistic scheme is irreconcilable with the sincerity of God.*

To see this, it is only necessary to contemplate the general invitations, commands, and exhortations of the gospel. With what earnestness is it proclaimed, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

In reference to the many such invitations and ardent entreaties as are to be found in the Scriptures, it may well be inquired, if Calvinism be true, how can they be the language of sincerity? Can God in sincerity command those to obey who have no more the power to obey than to make a world? Can he in sincerity offer salvation to those for whom he has never provided it? Can he entreat to "come unto him and be saved" those whom he has never designed to save, and whose salvation he knows to be absolutely impossible; and *that* through no fault of theirs, but by his own eternal decree, according to his sovereign will?

Calvinists endeavor, it is true, to reconcile these commands, entreaties, etc., which are addressed alike to all men, with the sincerity of God, by alleging that, if the reprobate have no power to come to Christ and be saved, this results only from a *moral* inability—they are unwilling themselves. But this cannot alter the case in the least, when it is remembered that, according to Calvinism, this "moral inability" can only be removed by the influence of *that grace which God has determined to*

withhold. The numerous subtilties by which Calvinists have endeavored to reconcile their system with the sincerity of God, have made no advance toward removing the difficulty. It may be shifted from one ground to another, but by no artifice can we reconcile with sincerity the offer of salvation to all men, if it be only possible to a few.

6. *The Calvinistic system tends to destroy the distinction between virtue and vice, and to render man an improper subject for future judgment, and for reward or punishment.*

Virtue or vice can only exist in man, as he is supposed to have the power to do right or wrong, according to his own determination. If, according to the theory of Calvinism, all the actions of men are determined by an absolute and eternal decree of God, so that the virtuous man cannot but be virtuous, and the vicious man cannot but be vicious, virtue and vice, so far as they determine the moral character of men, must be the same. They are both in accordance with, and result from, the will of the Divine Sovereign; and flow as impulsively from the eternal decree, which determines the means and the end, as the effect does from the cause. And it necessarily follows that virtue and vice are essentially the same, and no man can be a proper subject of praise or blame.

Again: we look at the solemn process of the general judgment; we see all men assembled at the bar of God, and called to account for all their actions here; and then see the reward of eternal life bestowed upon the righteous, and eternal punishment inflicted on the wicked; and we ask the question, why, according to Calvinism, are men called to account, and rewarded or punished for their actions? If all things were unalterably fixed by the eternal decrees, the judgment process is only an empty show, and no man can be a proper subject either of reward or punishment. For what, we ask, in view of the Calvinistic theory, can the wicked be punished? If it be said, for their sins, we ask, had they the power to avoid them? If it be said, for their unbelief, we ask, in whom were they required to believe? In a Saviour who never designed, or came, to save them? Surely it must be evident that if salvation never was possible for the reprobate, by no process of reasoning can it be shown to be proper to punish them for their failure to attain unto it. We think, therefore, that it is impossible to reconcile the Calvinistic system with the real distinction between virtue and vice, and with the doctrine of future judgment and rewards and punishments.

We have now noticed some of the leading difficulties with which the systems of Calvinism and Arminianism have been thought respectively to be encumbered; and, in conclusion, we would say that, notwithstanding, according to our showing, Calvinism labors under some very serious

difficulties, and leads to some revolting consequences, it likewise em bodies much evangelical truth; and the most objectionable consequences which have been deduced from the system have not been fairly acknowledged by all its advocates; yet, as we think they necessarily follow, as logical conclusions, it is but fair that they be plainly presented. We now close our discussion of the extent of the atonement, and present, as the substance of what we have endeavored to establish, the leading position with which we set out—"*that the atonement so extends to all men as to render salvation possible for them.*"

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXIV.

QUESTION 1. What three leading objections have been urged by Calvinists against Arminianism?

2. What is the substance of the answer to the first?
3. The second?
4. The third?
5. What is the first objection to Calvinism, and how is it sustained?
6. What is the second, and how is it sustained?
7. What is the third, and how is it sustained?
8. What is the fourth, and how is it sustained?
9. What is the fifth, and how is it sustained?
10. What is the sixth, and how is it sustained?
11. What is the substance of what has been established in reference to the extent of the atonement?

PART I.—DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK IV.—THE REMEDIAL SCHEME—ITS BENEFITS

CHAPTER XXV.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

HAVING considered, in the preceding chapters, the great and leading doctrines of theology, so far as they relate more directly to the character of the Divine Being, the history of the creation, and of the fall of man, and of the dreadful consequences of that fall, together with the glorious provision made for his recovery in the atonement of Christ, we now enter upon the examination of some of those doctrines of revelation in which the *benefits* of redemption are more directly connected with man, as a fallen, but accountable, moral agent. As a subject appropriate to be discussed at this stage of our general investigation, we propose *the influence of the Holy Spirit.*

The doctrine of *divine influence* is clearly revealed in the sacred Scriptures, and stands connected with every dispensation and every leading topic of religion. Against this great Bible truth infidelity has hurled her keenest shafts of ridicule, and manifested a most irreconcilable enmity. It is a subject upon which there has been a diversity of sentiment among the confessedly orthodox, while pseudo-Christians have exercised their ingenuity to explain it away. Yet we think it will appear in the sequel, that a renunciation of this doctrine is a renunciation of all vital religion, and that any modification or abatement of its full scriptural import is a proportionate surrender of the essentials of godliness.

The importance of this doctrine, considered in its connection with the scheme of human salvation, as well as the great extent of controversy which it has elicited in almost every age of the Church, should deeply

impress our minds with the necessity of the most implicit and devout reliance on the teachings of inspiration, that we may, upon this radical doctrine, be delivered from all dangerous error, and guided into the knowledge of all essential truth. The influence of the Holy Spirit is a doctrine so repeatedly and explicitly recognized in the Bible, that a formal renunciation of it would amount to a rejection of revelation. Hence all who have acknowledged the truth of the Scriptures have admitted, under some modification, the doctrine now proposed for discussion. But when the subject is closely scrutinized, and critical inquiry made concerning what is understood by the influence of the Spirit, it is manifest that the phrase is far from being of the same import in the lips of all who use it. Hence it is very important that we inquire carefully concerning the sense in which this doctrine is presented in Scripture.

I. THE DOCTRINE DEFINED.

1. *The Scriptures were inspired and confirmed by the miraculous agency of the Holy Spirit.*

On this point, we refer to the following passages of the holy word:—2 Pet. i. 21: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake *as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*" Acts xxviii. 25: "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers." Acts i. 16: "This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas." So far as the inspiration of the prophets is concerned, the above texts are conclusive.

In reference to the inspiration of the apostles, the following passages may be consulted:—Matt. x. 19, 20: "When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; *for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.* For it is not ye that speak, *but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.*" John xiv. 26: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, *he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*" 1 Cor. ii. 10, 12, 13: "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." "Now we have not received the Spirit of the world, but th Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things we also speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which *the Holy Ghost teacheth;* comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

From the foregoing passages, it is evident that the apostles were immediately inspired, by the Holy Ghost, to make known the truths of the gospel as recorded in the New Testament. To qualify them for the

great work assigned them, of publishing, and confirming by "signs and wonders, and divers miracles," the truths of the gospel, they were supernaturally endued with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. Thus commissioned and prepared, they went forth, and spoke, "as the Spirit gave them utterance," the wonderful things of God, and were enabled to heal the sick, raise the dead, and perform many notable miracles, by the power of the Holy Ghost, and "in the name of Jesus of Nazareth."

2. The Scriptures teach, *that the Holy Spirit operates on the minds and hearts of men, in convicting, regenerating, and converting the sinner, and in comforting, guiding, and sanctifying the Christian.*

Perhaps all professed Christians will admit the truth of this proposition; but all do not construe it in the same way. Therefore much care is requisite that we may perceive clearly the sense in which this subject is understood by different persons.

(1) The first theory that we shall notice upon this subject is that which *denies the personality of the Holy Spirit altogether, and explains the phrase to imply nothing but the manifestation of a divine attribute.*

The abettors of this theory reject the doctrine of the Trinity; and when they speak of the Holy Spirit, they do not mean a personal intelligence, but merely the manifestation or exercise of some of the divine attributes. Thus, by the indwelling of the Spirit in the heart of the Christian, they mean no more than this: that a disposition or quality somewhat resembling the divine attributes exists in the heart of the believer. Their view may be fairly illustrated by reference to a common figure of speech, by which, when an individual is possessed in an eminent degree of any quality for which another has been peculiarly celebrated, he is not only said to resemble him, but to possess his spirit. Thus the brave are said to possess the spirit of Cesar; the cruel, the spirit of Herod or of Nero; while the patient, faithful, affectionate, or zealous Christian, is said to possess the spirit of Job, of Abraham, of John, or of Paul.

In the same sense, say the advocates of this theory, he who is meek, humble, harmless, compassionate, and benevolent, is said to possess "*the Spirit* of Christ"—that is, he possesses qualities resembling those which shone so illustriously in the character of our Lord. So, when the Spirit of God is said to "dwell in the hearts" of Christians, it is merely to be understood that they partake, to a limited extent, of that disposition of love, goodness, holiness, etc., which, in infinite perfection, belongs to the divine character. Or, when the Christian is said to be influenced, operated upon, or "led by the Spirit of God," we are taught that he is merely actuated, in a limited degree, by those principles

of righteousness and holiness which pertain to the perfections of the Godhead.

In reference to this theory, we remark, that it appears to us to be nothing better than infidelity in disguise. While it acknowledges, in words, the doctrine of divine influence, it in reality denies it; and while it professedly bows to the majesty of inspiration, it in reality contradicts, or perverts, the plainest declarations of the Bible. So far from this theory acknowledging the *real influence* of the Holy Spirit, it denies his *real existence;* and would represent all that is said of the important offices, influences, and personal acts of the Holy Ghost—all that is said of his dwelling in the Father and in the Son—of his proceeding from them—of his abiding with, instructing, comforting, leading, and sanctifying the Christian, as mere rhetorical figures, by which actions, never really performed, are attributed to a being having only an imaginary existence.

As this theory is based upon the denial of the personality of the Holy Ghost, and as that notion has, we trust, been clearly refuted in a former chapter, we think it needless to dwell upon this point. Suffice it to say that, when a person is now said to be moved by the spirit of Nero, it is not implied that the ghost of that departed tyrant has literally entered the heart of the man, and exercises a real agency in instigating his cruel actions: when John the Baptist was said to have come in the "spirit and power of Elijah," we do not understand that there was a literal transmigration of spirit from the one to the other; it is most palpable that no real influence of the spirit of Nero or of Elijah is supposed in the above cases. And hence, according to this theory, the real influence of the Holy Spirit is positively discarded. And if the existence of the agent and his influence are both imaginary, it necessarily follows that the effect attributed to that influence, in convicting, regenerating, comforting, and sanctifying the soul, must also be imaginary. Thus it appears that this theory, in explaining away the personality and operations of the Holy Spirit, has really denied the actual existence of the change attributed to that agency, and explained experimental and practical godliness out of the world!

(2) A second theory upon this subject is that which contends that *all the influence of the Holy Spirit, since the age of miracles, is mediate and indirect through the written word.*

This, and the preceding view, are properly modifications of the same theory. The only distinction in the sentiments of the advocates of these theories is, that some deny, while others admit, the personality of the Holy Spirit; but they all agree in rejecting any direct divine influence on the hearts of men, and in confining the operation of the Spirit

to the medium of the written word. We think nothing is needed but a clear conception of the nature of this theory, in order to see that it amounts to a real denial of all divine influence, in the proper sense of the term. We will endeavor to ascertain the real import of this theory.

There is some ambiguity in the term *medium*, when it is said that "the Spirit operates through the medium of the written word." A medium may either be instrumental and passive, or efficient and active. In the former case, that which operates through the medium is a real agent, and performs a real operation; in the latter case, that which operates through the medium is no agent in the case, and performs no real operation, but is only said to operate by a figure of speech.

For an illustration of these two acceptations of the term medium, we would suppose a soldier to slay his enemy with his sword, and then to command his servant, and he buries the dead man. In this case, there are two different acts which may be properly attributed to the soldier—the slaying of the enemy, and his burial; each act is performed through a different medium—the sword is the medium through which the man is slain, but the servant is the medium through which he is buried. In the case of the sword, the medium is merely instrumental and passive; it only moves as it is wielded by the hand of the soldier, who is the real agent, and performs the real operation. In the case of the servant, the medium is an efficient and active one; it moves and acts of itself, independent of any direct assistance from the soldier; and although, in an accommodated or figurative sense, the burial of the man may be attributed to the soldier, it is obvious that the real agent is the servant; and the operation of burial is properly not performed by the soldier, but by his servant. Now, if it be understood that the "written word" is the medium through which the Holy Spirit operates, in the same sense in which the sword is the medium through which the soldier operates to the destruction of his foe, it is clear that there must be a *real* operation or exercise of the divine influence at the time. And such is, unquestionably, the scriptural view; but it is not the sense in which the abettors of this theory understand the subject. They admit no direct exertion of the divine influence at the time. They understand *the word* to be an efficient and active medium, acting as an agent in producing conviction, conversion, sanctification, etc., without any immediate exercise of divine influence at the time.

The sense in which they also understand the subject may be illustrated by reference to the influence of uninspired writings—such, for instance, as the writings of Baxter, or of Fletcher, which still exert an influence on

the minds of thousands who read them, long after the authors have become silent in death. Here, in an accommodated sense, Baxter and Fletcher are still said to be operating through their writings on the minds of men; but is it not clear that all the real operation performed by them ceased when they "ceased at once to work and live?" They put forth no direct energy at any subsequent time.

Just so, the advocates of this theory tell us, the Spirit of God inspired the Scriptures—wrought miracles for the establishment of the gospel—but that the direct influence of the Holy Ghost then ceased; and that the Spirit only operates through the word in the same sense in which the spirit of Baxter operates through the volume entitled, "The Saint's Rest." Now we think it must be clear that this is no real operation of the Holy Spirit at all. It is only understood in such sense as that in which a master workman may be said to be the builder of a house which was reared by his under-workmen, when he, perhaps, was hundreds of miles distant from the spot; or in such sense as an uninspired author, long since dead, may be said to operate through his writings, which he produced while living; or as the ingenious artisan may be said to operate through the machinery which he formed, while it may continue to move after it has passed from his hand. In such, and only such, sense as this, we are told, the Spirit of God now operates on the minds and hearts of men. Against this theory we enter our solemn protest.

(3) The third theory upon this subject is that which we believe to be the true scriptural view of the doctrine. It admits the *indirect* influence of the Spirit through the "written word," as contended for in the scheme above explained; and *maintains that there is likewise a direct and immediate divine influence, not only accompanying the written word, but also operating through the divine providence and all the various means of grace.*

That the real point of controversy on this subject may be clearly seen, we remark—

1. That the advocates of this last theory freely admit that the Holy Spirit does operate on the minds and hearts of men through the medium of the written word—they do not deny that the arguments and motives of the gospel are designed as means, or instrumentalities, leading to salvation.

2. It is admitted, farther, that the direct influence of the Spirit contended for is not designed to reveal new truths, but merely to arouse, quicken, or renew, the unregenerate heart; or to impress, apply, or give, efficiency to truths already revealed, and thus to exert an efficient

agency in the great work of convicting, regenerating, and converting sinners, and illuminating, comforting, and sanctifying believers.

3. It is admitted also, that the word of truth is the ordinary instrumentality by which the Spirit operates on those to whom the gospel is addressed.

Therefore the real point of dispute is, whether there is any *direct influence of the Spirit*, distinct from the *indirect* or *mediate* influence through the truths, arguments, and motives of the gospel.

II. THE DOCTRINE PROVED. That there is a direct influence of the Spirit, as contended for by the advocates of this theory, we will now proceed to show.

1. The Scriptures in numerous places speak of a divine influence being exercised over the minds of persons, which, from the circumstances of the case, must have been distinct from arguments and motives presented in words to the eye or the ear.

Prov. xxi. 1: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord: as the rivers of water, *he turneth it* whithersoever he will." Ezra vi. 22: "For the Lord had made them joyful, and *turned the heart* of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel." In these passages the Lord is represented as operating on the hearts of kings, when, according to the context, the influence must have been direct and distinct from written or spoken language.

Luke xxiv. 45: "Then *opened he their understanding*, that they *might understand* the Scriptures." Acts xvi. 14: "Whose *heart the Lord opened*, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." Here the *understanding* and the *heart* are said to be *opened* by the Lord—not *by the Scriptures*, but that they "might understand the Scriptures," and "attend unto the things which were spoken." Consequently there must have been a divine influence, distinct from the mere word uttered or heard.

2. Prayer is presented in Scripture as efficacious in securing the influence of the Spirit.

Ps. cxix. 18: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." Ps. li. 10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Rom. x. 1: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved." From these scriptures it is clear that both the prophet and the apostle offered prayer to God as though they expected a direct answer to their petitions. Now, upon the supposition that there is no influence of the Holy Spirit except through the word, it is wholly incon-

ceivable how prayer can be of any avail in securing the blessings desired.

Again, in Luke xi. 13, we read: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." Here is a general promise, restricted to no class of persons, or age, of the world. Upon the hypothesis that there is no direct influence of the Spirit, how can such language be consistently understood? Are we to expect the written word to be miraculously bestowed in answer to prayer? No one, surely, can so understand this promise; and yet, if we deny the direct influence of the Spirit, how else can it be interpreted?

3. Again: if the Spirit of God operates only through the word, all idiots, infants, and pagans, who die without hearing that word, must perish everlastingly. We proved in a former chapter that all mankind are by nature totally depraved, and that a radical change of heart is essential to their admission into heaven. If, then, this change can only be effected through the medium of the word, or truth, of God, those who are incapable of hearing that word never can realize the change, and consequently must be doomed to inevitable destruction. From this consequence of the doctrine we oppose, there is no possible escape.

III. Objections answered. We will now notice some *objections* which have been urged against the direct influence of the Spirit for which we have contended:

1. It has been argued that, from *the constitution of the human mind*, it is impossible that it can be influenced except by words, arguments, or motives, which can only be communicated in language addressed to the eye or the ear.

To this objection we reply, that the premises here assumed are not true. It cannot be proved that there is *such* a constitution of our nature. Indeed, it is most evident that there can be no such thing. Is the power of the Holy One thus to be limited by us, where he himself has placed no limit? As man was originally created holy, independently of arguments, or motives, addressed to his understanding, why should we suppose it impossible that the same Almighty Power should "create him anew," and restore him to his pristine purity, by a similar direct energy?

Again: it is admitted that Satan can tempt, seduce, and influence the minds of men to evil, in a thousand different ways. We ask, has the prince of darkness a Bible—has *he* a written revelation, by which, through the eye or the ear, he addresses the human race? Or is it so

that *he* possesses greater power over man than God himself? Can Satan reach the human mind, so as to instil his deadly poison, and exert his soul-destroying influence, separate and distinct from a direct revelation, but must God himself be restricted to words, arguments, or motives? The position is too monstrous to be entertained.

2. It is objected that if God can, and does, operate on the minds of men, separate and distinct from his word, *then his word is rendered useless.*

To this we reply, that the objection is good for nothing, because the conclusion does not follow from the premises. It is what logicians call a *non sequitur.* The word of God is the ordinary instrument with those to whom it is addressed; but the Holy Spirit is the efficient agent by whom the instrument is wielded. Now, is it logical to argue that because the instrument cannot accomplish the appropriate work of the agent, therefore it can be of no use in reference to the work for which it is assigned? As well might we argue that because the hand cannot perform the office of the eye, it is therefore useless, and should be cast away. Because God can work, and, where means are not appropriate, does work without means, shall we therefore conclude that he shall be precluded from the use of means in all cases?

3. It is objected that regeneration, conversion, etc., are said in Scripture to be *through, or by, the word of truth.*

To this we reply, that they are in no place said to be through, or by, *the word alone.* That the word is the ordinary *instrumental* cause, with those to whom the gospel is addressed, is admitted; but it is in no case the *efficient* cause of either regeneration or sanctification. "It is the Spirit which quickeneth." We "must be born of the Spirit." And it is "through sanctification of the Spirit" that we must be prepared for heaven. When the apostles received their grand commission to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," it was connected with the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." On this promise they relied in faith, and prayer to God for success.

IV. We will now consider more particularly *the direct influence of the Spirit in the conviction and regeneration of sinners.*

The Bible clearly teaches that, through the successive ages of the world, the minds of men have been quickened and illuminated by the agency of the Holy Spirit. It has, however, been denied by some, that *sinners* have a right to pray or look to God for any influence of the Spirit, till they first believe, repent, and submit to baptism. What is quite singular is, that these same persons who tell us that baptized

believers are entitled to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and that such only are authorized to pray for the influence of the Spirit, contend also, most strenuously, that there is no divine influence except that which is mediate, through the written word. Now to us it seems manifestly inconsistent, for such as deny the direct influence of the Spirit, to say that "the Holy Spirit dwells in all the faithful," and is only promised to baptized believers, and that for any others to pray for it is unauthorized and preposterous. What! is it so that none but baptized believers can read or hear the word of God? Or is there a veil upon every man's understanding till removed by baptism, which so obscures his intellect, and indurates his moral faculties, that he can neither perceive the evidence nor feel the force of truth? To contend that the Spirit operates only through the word of truth, and then to speak of an indwelling influence of the Spirit as being restricted to baptized believers, is perfectly puerile. For if a mediate influence, through the written word, be the only sense in which the operation of the Spirit is to be understood, surely it is alike accessible to all who read or hear the word, whether baptized or unbaptized. But we think the Scriptures themselves will settle this point.

1. The *direct* influence of the Spirit, by *promise, extends to sinners.*

God, by the mouth of his prophet, (Joel ii. 28,) declares, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." Here observe—

(1) This influence of the Spirit is promised to sinners; for the terms are of the widest possible import—"all flesh." Now, to pretend that sinners are not included in that phrase, is not to expound the sacred word, but most unceremoniously to push it aside.

(2) The influence of the Spirit was intended to convict, and lead to salvation; for the prophet directly adds, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord *shall be delivered.*" It will not avail to appeal to the words of Peter on the day of Pentecost, to prove a restriction in the application of the universal phrase, "all flesh." It is true Peter says, "This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel"—but does he say that the prophet spoke in reference to the day of Pentecost alone? Does he say that the words of the prophet were to have no farther fulfillment? He makes no such statement. Indeed, we have the most conclusive evidence that he had no such meaning. For, in the fifteenth chapter of The Acts, he speaks of the "gift of the Holy Ghost" having been afterward granted to the Gentiles, even as it had been conferred on the Jews; and in the eleventh chapter of The Acts, the apostle says, respecting the Gentiles, "The Holy Ghost fell on them *as on us at the beginning.*"

Here, then, is positive proof that if the affusion of the Spirit at Pentecost was a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, so was the affusion of the Spirit on the Gentiles. The argument of the apostle is, that the Gentiles have received the same spiritual blessing; therefore they are entitled to the same Church privileges—the same reasoning would demonstrate that, as the blessings were similar, if one was a fulfillment of the words of the prophet, so was the other. Hence we perceive the plea for restricting the application of the prophet's words cannot be sustained. He uses language of universal application; the apostle has not attempted, nor dare we attempt, to limit the application. The words still stand, and will continue to be fulfilled, as long as the gospel shall endure.

As an additional proof that they are intended for universal application, throughout the entire dispensation of the gospel, we remark, that St. Paul quotes, in Rom. x., a part of the same prophecy of Joel, and uses it as a stereotyped truth, of universal application, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

But suppose us to admit, for the sake of argument, that Joel's prophecy had its entire fulfillment on the day of Pentecost, will it then appear that the influence of the Spirit was not, in that prophecy, promised to sinners? The very reverse will be clearly apparent. To whom was Peter preaching on that occasion? Was it not to a congregation of wicked sinners, whom he directly charges with the crucifixion of the Lord? To this very congregation of sinners, Peter declares, "*The promise* is unto *you* and to *your children*, and to *all that are afar off*, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." What promise is this? Most evidently it at least *includes* the promise of the outpouring of the Spirit, which he had quoted from Joel. This argument cannot be evaded by saying that Peter only promised them the Holy Ghost on the condition of repentance and baptism; for it is admitted that the promise of the Holy Ghost as a Comforter cannot be claimed by the sinner, as such. Yet, that sinners had the promise of the Spirit's influence, even before their repentance, in the prophecy of Joel, we have already proved; and that these very sinners were so affected by the operation of the Spirit as to be convicted of sin, and made to cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" the context most plainly evinces.

Again, in the sixteenth chapter of John, our Saviour declares that when the Comforter is come, "he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believed not on me," etc. On this passage we remark that our Saviour uses terms of

universality—"the world," without any limitation; and (as if to show that he means especially the world of sinners) he adds, "of sin, because they *believe not* on me." Here, then, the unbelieving world has the promise of the Holy Spirit, in his reproving or convicting influences.

2. *The Scriptures furnish instances in which the Spirit has operated directly on the minds of sinners.*

In Gen. vi. 3. we read: "And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." Connect with this the language of Peter, in the third chapter of his first Epistle: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." Here it appears that for "one hundred and twenty years" the Spirit of God *strove with* that wicked people to lead them to repentance; but, as they resisted its influence, they were swept off by the flood.

Christ is said to have "preached" to the antediluvians "by the Spirit." Now, unless we admit that the Spirit directly operated on the minds of that ungodly race, how can these words be interpreted? To say that nothing is meant, but simply the preaching of Noah, is perfectly gratuitous. That Noah was a "preacher of righteousness," and warned the people of the approaching deluge, and that he was inspired to do this by the Holy Spirit, is freely admitted; but here Christ is said to have preached to them, not through Noah, but "by the Spirit." That Noah, while busily employed in the preparation of the ark, preached to every individual of the race then upon earth, cannot be proved, nor is it reasonable to be inferred. But to those "spirits" now "in prison," without exception, "Christ preached by the Spirit."

Again, in reference to this, God said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man"—that is, with the *entire race* then existing. Those who can explain these passages by reference merely to the personal ministry of Noah, without admitting the *direct* influence of the Spirit in addition to the mere words and arguments of Noah, may well be considered persons of easy faith. So far from founding their belief on a "Thus saith the Lord," they shape it according to their own fancy, in direct contradiction to the written word.

Again: that the Holy Spirit operated on the minds and hearts of the Jewish nation, through the successive ages of the Mosaic dispensation, is evident from Acts vii. 51: "Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in

heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye."

Here the first martyr, in his last sermon to his incensed and wicked persecutors, charges them with "resisting the Holy Ghost," which they could not have done had he not first operated upon them.

As an evidence of the wickedness of the Jews of former times, in thus "resisting the Holy Ghost," they are directly charged with having "persecuted and slain the prophets;" showing a malignant and rebellious disposition, such as actuated the betrayers and murderers of our Lord. Now, to understand this as only implying that they had resisted the words of the prophets, who were inspired by the Holy Ghost, is not to expound the sacred word, but most presumptuously to shape it according to our own notion. The Jews are charged with "resisting," not the words of the prophets, but "the Holy Ghost." The language, in its plainest import, signifies a direct resistance of the real agency of the Holy Spirit. Before we venture the assertion that the divine influence in question was only indirect, through the written or spoken word, we should have explicit authority for such a departure from the most obvious sense of the language.

3. That the Holy Spirit operates directly on the hearts of sinners, may be very conclusively argued from the fact that conviction, regeneration, and the entire change of moral character produced by the influence of religion, is in Scripture attributed to the Spirit's agency. The Spirit is said to "convict;" it is declared that we "must be born of th Spirit;" and all the graces constituting the Christian character, such as "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," etc., are said to be "the fruit of the Spirit." From all this it is clear that, as conviction, the new birth, and all the graces of the Christian, are attributed to the influence of the Spirit, there must be an operation of the Spirit on the heart previous to their existence, in order to produce them; and if so, the Spirit must operate on the hearts of sinners.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXV.

QUESTION 1. How has this doctrine been viewed by infidels?

2. How by the different classes of Christians?

3. What is said of its importance?

4. What is the first theory noticed on the subject, and how is it illustrated?

5. Does this theory admit the *real* influence of the Spirit?

6. What is the second theory noticed, and how does it differ from the first?

7. In what two senses may the term *medium* be used?

8. What is the distinction between an *instrument* and an *agent*?

9. Does this theory imply any *real* operation of the Spirit?

10. What is the true *scriptural view* of the doctrine?

11. Does the Spirit now operate so as to *reveal new truths*?

12. How is it shown that the Spirit operates in *conviction*?

13. How is it shown to be absurd to deny the *direct* influence of the Spirit, and at the same time restrict its influence to *baptized believers*?

14. What instances are given in which the Spirit did operate on the hearts of *sinners*?

CHAPTER XXVI.

REPENTANCE—ITS NATURE, MEANS, AND NECESSITY.

To the subject of *Repentance* great prominence has been given, not only by theologians generally, but also by the inspired penmen. Repentance was not only a theme familiar with the prophets of the Old Testament, but it was the burden of the message of John the Baptist, and an important point in the preaching of Christ himself and his immediate apostles.

In the present investigation we propose to consider—

I. *The Nature of Repentance.*

II. *The Means of Repentance.*

III. *The Necessity of Repentance.*

I. In endeavoring to ascertain *the Scripture doctrine in reference to the nature of repentance,* which is the point proposed as first to be discussed, we hope to be conducted by the plain teachings of the Bible to such conclusions as shall be clear and satisfactory to the candid mind.

1. In inquiring for the Scripture import of repentance, it is natural that our first appeal be made to the *etymology of the word.*

Here we find that two different words in the Greek Testament, varying in their signification, are rendered "repent." These are *μεταμέλομαι* and *μετανοέω.* The former implies *a sorrowful change of the mind,* or properly, *contrition for sin;* the latter implies all that is meant by the former, together with *reformation from sin*—that is, it implies a *sorrow for,* and a consequent *forsaking of, or turning away from, sin.* Macknight, in reference to these words, makes the following critical remarks: "The word, *metanoia,* properly denotes such a change of one's opinion concerning some action which he hath done, as produceth a change in his conduct to the better. But the word, *metameleia,* signifies the *grief* which one feels for what he hath done, though it is followed with no alteration of conduct. The two words, however, are used indiscriminately in the LXX., for *a change of conduct,* and for *grief* on account of what hath been done." (See Macknight on 2 Cor. vii. 10.)

Here it may be observed that, although there is a diversity, there is no opposition of meaning in these two words. The only difference is,

the one implies more than the other. *Matanoeo* implies all that is implied by *metamelomai*, together with something farther. It is worthy of notice that with us, in common conversation, we frequently use the English word *repent*, merely to denote the idea of sorrow or contrition for the past, whether that sorrow be accompanied by any change of conduct or not. But in the investigation of the Scripture meaning of repentance, the distinction above made is important to be kept in mind.

In reference to the repentance of Judas, spoken of in Matt. xxvii. 3, a form of the verb *metamelomai* is used, from which we conclude that there is no evidence from that expression whether his repentance went farther than mere contrition or not. But generally, where repentance is spoken of in Scripture, connected in any sense with salvation, the word used is a derivative of *metanoeo*. Hence we conclude that the proper definition of *evangelical repentance*, or that repentance which the gospel requires, includes both *contrition* and *reformation*.

2. In accordance with what we have said, we find the definition of repentance, as adopted by Dr. Thomas Scott, to be as follows: "A genuine sorrow for sin, attended with a real inclination to undo, if it were possible, all we have sinfully done; and consequently an endeavor, as far as we have it in our power, to counteract the consequences of our former evil conduct; with a determination of mind, through divine grace, to walk for the future in newness of life, evidenced to be sincere by fruits meet for repentance—that is, by all holy dispositions, words, and actions." (Scott's Works, Vol. IV., p. 43.)

Substantially the same, but perhaps better expressed, is the definition of repentance given by Mr. Watson in his Biblical Dictionary, thus: "Evangelical repentance is a godly sorrow wrought in the heart of a sinful person by the word and Spirit of God, whereby, from a sense of his sin, as offensive to God and defiling and endangering to his own soul, and from an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, he, with grief and hatred of all his known sins, turns from them to God as his Saviour and Lord."

By attention to the above definitions, as well as from the etymology of the word as already given, it will appear that all that is implied by evangelical repentance is properly embraced under one or the other of the two general heads presented—that is, *contrition* and *reformation*. There may be both contrition and reformation, but if they are not of the right kind—if either of them be spurious—the repentance is not genuine. We may suppose the contrition to be genuine, yet if the genuine reformation does not ensue, the repentance is not evangelical.

Or we may suppose a thorough reformation to take place, at least so far as externals are concerned, yet, if it does not proceed from a right source—if it does not flow from a "godly sorrow, wrought by the Spirit of God"—the repentance cannot be genuine.

It may, however, be necessary to enlarge somewhat upon the definitions given.

(1) First, then, in reference to that part of repentance which we have termed *contrition*, we observe, that it always presupposes and flows from *conviction*.

What we think to be a little inaccuracy of expression has occurred with most theological writers, whether Calvinistic or Arminian, in reference to this point. It has generally been represented that conviction constitutes a part of repentance.

Mr. Watson, than whom, we believe, a more discriminating divine, and one more critically correct, has never written, in speaking of repentance, uses, in his Biblical Dictionary, the following words: "Taken in a religious sense, it signifies conviction of sin, and sorrow for it." Now, that *conviction* must necessarily precede repentance, and is indispensable to its existence, we readily concede; but that it constitutes a part of repentance, we think is so palpably unscriptural, that it is a little surprising that critical divines should so generally have passed over this point in such haste as to adopt the inaccuracy of expression in which, as we have seen, the penetrating Watson has, though inadvertently, we believe, followed them.

That conviction cannot be a part of repentance, we may clearly see when we reflect that God has never promised to repent for any man. "God is not the son of man that he should *repent*," but he "has commanded *all men* everywhere to *repent*." Again: conviction is a work which the Lord performs by the agency of the Holy Spirit, which is promised "to reprove (or convict) the world of sin," etc. Now, we see from these passages, as well as from the whole tenor of Scripture, that God is the agent who convicts, and man is the agent who, under that conviction, and through divine grace, is called upon to repent. God has never commanded us to convict ourselves, but he has commanded us to repent. Hence we infer that conviction constitutes no part of repentance.

Again: that conviction cannot be a part of repentance is clear, not only from the definitions quoted from Scott and Watson, but also from the etymology of the word *repent*, as already shown. According to all these, "repentance is a sorrow for sin," etc. Now, "sorrow for sin" is not conviction, but an effect of conviction. Conviction, unless

resisted, results in repentance; it leads to it, but does not constitute a part of it.

(2) Again, we remark that *contrition, the first part of repentance, when not stifled or resisted by the sinner, results in, and leads to, reformation—the second part of repentance.*

This may be seen from the words of the apostle, in 2 Cor. vii. 10: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of." Some have concluded from this passage that "godly sorrow" cannot be a part of repentance, because it is said to "work repentance;" and "repentance," say they, "cannot be said to work, or produce, itself." This seems to be rather a play upon words. We readily admit that a thing cannot be both effect and cause, at the same time and in the same sense; and consequently, in this acceptation, repentance cannot be the cause of itself. But one part of repentance may be the cause of the other; and this we believe is the clear meaning of the passage quoted: "Godly sorrow (that is, contrition, or the first part of repentance) worketh (or leadeth to, the second part of repentance—that is, the completion of repentance—or, as it is expressed in the text) repentance to salvation." Although "godly sorrow" is repentance begun, yet no repentance is "repentance to salvation" till it is completed; or till it extends to a thorough reformation of heart and life. Hence we say with propriety that repentance begun worketh repentance completed; or, which is the same thing, "godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation."

(3) Repentance presupposes *the sinful condition of man.*

"A just person needeth no repentance." As none can repent of their sins till they are first convicted, so none can be convicted of sin but such as have sinned. The general position here assumed—that sinners, and such only are proper subjects for repentance—is clear from the Scriptures. One or two quotations may be allowed. In Matt. ix. 13, the Saviour says: "I am not come to call the righteous, but *sinners*, to repentance." In Luke xiii. 2, 3: "Jesus answering, said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were *sinners* above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay; but except ye *repent*, ye shall all likewise perish." Here the argument is, that as all are sinners, therefore they must repent, or perish.

(4) The last question we shall discuss concerning the nature of repentance, *relates to its connection with faith and regeneration.*

Upon this subject, between Calvinists generally, and Arminians, there is a great difference of sentiment. But this difference relates not to the abstract, but to the relative, nature of repentance. They agree with

regard to what repentance is, considered in itself; but differ with regard to its relative character, as connected with faith and regeneration. The Calvinistic doctrine is, that faith and repentance both flow necessarily from, and are always preceded by, regeneration.

The Calvinistic view on this subject is clearly presented in Buck's Dictionary, thus: "1. Regeneration is the work of God enlightening the mind and changing the heart, and in order of time precedes faith. 2. Faith is the consequence of regeneration, and implies the perception of an object. It discerns the evil of sin, the holiness of God, gives credence to the testimony of God in his word, and seems to precede repentance, since we cannot repent of that of which we have no clear perception, or no concern about. 3. Repentance is an after-thought, or sorrowing for sin, the evil nature of which faith perceives, and which immediately follows faith. Conversion is a turning from sin, which faith sees, and repentance sorrows for; and seems to follow, and to be the end of, all the rest." (Buck's Dict., Art. Faith.)

Here we see that, according to the above, which is the view of Calvinists generally, there is, in reference to these graces, in point of time, the following order: 1. Regeneration. 2. Faith. 3. Repentance. 4. Conversion.

Arminians think the Scriptures present a different order on this subject. They contend that, so far from repentance and faith being preceded by regeneration, and flowing from it, they precede, and are conditions of, regeneration. But our business in the present chapter is with the subject of repentance. We shall endeavor to show that it precedes both saving faith and regeneration.

Now observe, we do not contend that repentance precedes the enlightening, and, to some extent, the quickening, influence of the Holy Spirit, and some degree of faith; but we do contend that repentance precedes justifying faith and the new birth, which constitute an individual a new creature, or a child of God.

We shall examine this subject in the light of Scripture.

1. It appears evident from *the total depravity of human nature*, as taught in Scripture, that the soul must first be visited by the convicting grace of God, and that a degree of faith must be produced before the first step can be taken toward salvation.

This we find also clearly taught in the word of God. In Heb. xi. 6, we read: "But without *faith* it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must *believe that he is*, and that *he is a rewarder* of them that diligently seek him." To show that at least a degree of conviction and of faith must necessarily precede evangelical repentance, many

other texts might be adduced; but as this is a point which will scarcely be disputed, we deem the above sufficient.

We proceed now to show that evangelical repentance precedes justifying faith and regeneration. It should, however, be remembered, that we do not contend that there is no repentance after faith and regeneration. It is freely admitted that repentance may and does continue, in some sense and to some extent, as long as there are remains of sin in the soul, or perhaps as long as the soul continues in the body; for even if we suppose the soul to be "cleansed from all sin," a sorrowful remembrance of past sins, which constitutes one part of repentance, may still be properly exercised. But the point of controversy is not whether repentance may succeed, but whether it precedes justifying faith and regeneration. A few passages of Scripture, we think, may determine the question.

2. The general custom with the sacred writers, wherever repentance is spoken of in connection with faith or regeneration, *is to place repentance first.*

Thus we read, Acts xx. 21: "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, *repentance* toward God, and *faith* toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts v. 31: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give *repentance* to Israel, and *forgiveness of sins.*" Mark i. 15: "*Repent* ye, and *believe* the gospel." In these passages *repentance* is placed *before faith* and *forgiveness.* Now, although we would not rest our argument simply on the fact that repentance is placed invariably foremost by the inspired writers, yet, upon the supposition that it is always preceded by faith and regeneration, it would be difficult to account for the general observance of this order in the Scriptures.

Again: the Scriptures frequently speak of repentance as the first step or commencement of religion. The dispensation of John the Baptist was introductory or preparatory to the gospel; and his preaching was emphatically the doctrine of repentance. He called on the people to repent and be baptized with "the baptism of *repentance*," and this was to prepare the way for Christ—to prepare the people by repentance for the reception of the gospel by *faith.* In Heb. vi. 1, we read: "Not laying again the *foundation of repentance* from dead works, and of *faith* toward God." Here repentance is not only placed before faith, but it is spoken of as the "foundation," or commencement, in religion.

3. In Acts ii. 38, St. Peter says: "*Repent*, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the *remission of sins*, and ye shall receive *the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" These persons could not have

been regenerated believers, for if so, their sins must have been already remitted; but they were commanded to "repent and be baptized," in order to remission. Hence it is clear that with them repentance preceded remission; but, as remission always accompanies faith and regeneration, their repentance must have preceded faith and regeneration. It is said in Matt. xxi. 32: "And ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye *might believe* him." Here repentance is presented as a necessary antecedent of faith.

Quotations on this point might be greatly extended, but we will add but one text more — Acts iii. 19: "*Repent* ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Here repentance, so far from being presented as "an after-thought," following saving faith and regeneration, is presented as one of the conditions in order to remission: and, consequently, in order to faith and regeneration.

4. We here simply add, that the Calvinistic scheme, in requiring regeneration and justifying faith to precede repentance, appears to be not only not countenanced by the general tenor of Scripture, but is likewise seriously objectionable on other grounds. As "all men, everywhere," are "commanded to repent," and that, not after they shall become regenerated, but "now"—at this moment—it follows either that they are commanded to do what God knows they cannot do, or that repentance may precede regeneration.

Once more: as all men are required to repent, and warned that "except they repent, they shall perish," it follows, that if they cannot repent till they are first regenerated, and if regeneration be a work in which "the sinner is passive," as the Calvinists teach, then the finally impenitent may urge a fair excuse for neglecting to repent; they may say: "Truly we never repented, but we are not to blame; repentance could not precede regeneration, and we were compelled to wait for thy regenerating grace." We deem it useless to pursue this subject farther. We have endeavored to illustrate the nature of repentance, both by considering what it implies in the abstract, and by noticing its relation to faith and regeneration.

II. Our second proposition is, to consider *the means of repentance.*

In contemplating this subject, we would here endeavor to guard against presumption on the one hand, and despair on the other. By the former, we may be led to look upon repentance as a work of our own, that we may fully accomplish by the unassisted exercise of our own powers; and thus we may be led to despise the proffered grace of the gospel, and by scornfully rejecting the aid of Heaven, be left to perish

in our sins. By the latter, we may be led to look upon repentance as a work of God alone, in reference to which the efforts of man are perfectly useless; and thus we may be led to repose our consciences upon the downy pillow of careless indifference, and yield ourselves up to the seducing slumbers of sin, till the door of repentance shall be closed against us forever. A correct understanding of this subject will tend to preserve us from danger from either extreme; and while it will ascribe all "the excellency of the power," in repentance to God, it will place before man, in its proper light, his appropriate duty. To suppose that the carnal mind can turn itself to God, and by its own innate, underived energy, work out "repentance unto salvation," is to set aside the doctrine of human depravity, and contradict those scriptures which refer to God as the author of repentance. To suppose that man can have no agency whatever in the work of repentance, is to deny his responsibility for his actions, and discard those scriptures which call upon "all men, everywhere, to repent."

It is very true, God is the author of all evangelical repentance. He is said "to give" and "to grant repentance;" but, in the same sense, he is the author of all good; for every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the "Father of lights." God gives or grants repentance in the same sense in which he gives us health in our bodies, or the rich harvest in our fields. None, however, are so foolish as to expect these blessings in the neglect of the means. Do men refuse medicine when they are sick, because God is the author of health? or refuse to sow or to plow, because the harvest is the gift of God? In reference to these things, men do not reason with such folly Why, then, should any excuse themselves from the duty of repentance because it is said to be a gift or grant from the Lord? The truth is that although God is the author of repentance, yet he confers that blessing according to a certain plan; and such as use the prescribed means have the promise that they shall attain unto the proposed end. What are those means?

1. The first that we shall notice is *serious reflection.*

The sinful multitude, immersed in worldly pursuits—allured by the "fictitious trappings of honor, the imposing charms of wealth, or the impious banquets of pleasure"—seldom take time to listen to the voice of religion. Moses laments over the thoughtlessness of an ungodly race, saying: "O that they were wise, that they *understood* this; that they would *consider* their latter end!" The Lord himself exhibits against his forgetful Israel the following solemn accusation: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not

know, my people do not *consider*." So it has been in every age: the first difficulty in the way of the messenger of salvation has been to arouse and engage the serious attention of the careless sinner. Our holy religion "commends itself to every man's conscience," and will command homage, if once it gain attention. The first thing, therefore, to be accomplished, if we would repent of our sins, is seriously to "consider our ways." Let us pause in our headlong rush to destruction, and ponder the paths of our feet; let us give to the religion of Christ that consideration which its importance demands, and to our own conduct that honest reflection which its nature requires, and the impression will be such as is calculated to lead to repentance.

2. The next *means* of repentance which we will notice is *self-examination.*

To repent of our sins, we must first see and feel them. The man must know that he is diseased before he will send for the physician; even so, we must so examine our hearts and lives as to discover that we are indeed sinners, before we will cry, "Lord, save, or we perish." We should so examine ourselves in the light of God's truth as to bring up to our view not only our flagrant transgressions, our outward and more daring crimes, but also our secret faults, our more hidden sins. We should probe the soul to the very center, and bring out to view its naked deformity, its exceeding sinfulness. Well has it been said:

> Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> As, to be hated, needs but to be seen.

Even so, could we but so examine our hearts and lives as to array our sins before us in all their turpitude, we should be led to cry out, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips." We should be led to "abhor ourselves, and to *repent* in dust and ashes." But there is, perhaps, no work in which the sinner can engage, more irksome to the feelings than self-examination. As if conscious of our fearful delinquencies, we shun the investigation, lest we should be "weighed in the balances, and found wanting."

3. The next *means* of repentance which we shall notice is *meditation on the goodness of God.*

Paul says: "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." Such is the gracious arrangement of a merciful God, that those inducements which are the best calculated to enlist our attention and engage our affections, are presented us in the gospel. Our hopes and our fears, our affections and our aversions, our reason, judgment, and conscience, are all addressed. But perhaps no emotion is more sweetly captivating to

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the better feelings of the soul than *gratitude*. When is it that the child with most emotion dwells upon the character and the actions of a dear departed parent? It is when busy memory calls up to the freshness of life a thousand acts of kindness and affection. When the tender sympathies and watchful concern, which none but a father or a mother can feel, are brought up to our minds as from the solemn grave, then it is that we feel the obligations of gratitude; then the last pious admonition of a departed parent rushes upon the memory and subdues the heart, with an eloquence surpassing the power of the most pathetic sermon.

But if earthly parents, by the ten thousand benefits which we derive from them, can have claims on our gratitude, how much greater are the claims of our heavenly Father! The "goodness and mercy of the Lord have followed us all the days of our lives." We read his mercy in all his works. It is written upon every leaf, and wafted upon every breeze. It glows in every star, and sparkles in every brook. But, above all, in the unspeakable gift of Christ, in his sufferings and death for our sins, we behold, beyond the power of language to tell, the love of God to us. A consideration of this glorious theme should lead us to repentance. Hard, indeed, must be the heart, and fiend-like the soul, that can contemplate such a debt of love, and feel no pang in offending against such goodness. Meditation on the goodness of the Lord should lead us to repentance.

4. The fourth and last means to aid us in the duty of repentance, is *an ardent looking to God, and dependence upon him, in faith and prayer.*

In vain may the husbandman plow or sow, unless the fruitful season be given by the Lord. Even so, all our efforts are vain, without the divine blessing upon them. Yet we need not be discouraged, for God hath promised: "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." And again: "Every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." We should "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find" the grace of repentance, that we may live.

III. As the *third* and *last* division of our subject, we shall briefly notice *the necessity of repentance.*

The broad and comprehensive ground on which the *necessity* of repentance is based, is most forcibly expressed in Scripture in the following sentence: "Except ye repent, *ye shall all likewise perish.*" Here is the ground of its necessity. Without repentance, we can have no hope of happiness. We must inevitably perish. There are, however, various

considerations upon which the truth of this proposition is based. A few of these we shall now briefly notice.

1. *It results from the nature of that law against which we have sinned, and under whose curse we have fallen.*

Had we violated a law like many of the statutes of earthly monarchs, unreasonable or unjust in its requirements, a righteous administration might remit the penalty, without the requirement of repentance. But the divine law which we have transgressed, required no unreasonable service. It is "holy, just, and good." In sinning against such a law, the eternal fitness of things, the immutable principles of equity and justice, demand the infliction of condign punishment. Hence, without repentance, we can no more hope to escape the sentence of justice, than we can expect the very throne of heaven to be shaken, and the government of God demolished.

2. *The necessity of repentance appears from the very nature of sin.*

What is sin, both in its essence and consequences? It is direct rebellion against God. It is a renunciation of allegiance to our Maker. It is a surrender of our powers to the service of the grand enemy of God and man; and it brings upon the soul that derangement and contamination of all its powers, which utterly disqualify for the service and enjoyment of God.

It is an axiom of eternal truth, that we "cannot serve God and mammon." We cannot, at the same time, serve the devil, the source and fountain of all evil, and the Lord Jehovah, the source and fountain of all good and of all happiness. To be prepared for the service of God here, for those devout and holy exercises which religion requires, we must renounce the service of sin and Satan. We must "cast off the works of darkness," before we are prepared to "put on the armor of light." And how, we ask, even if we were not required to serve God here, could we be prepared, with hearts which are "enmity to God," and polluted souls, "desperately wicked," to enter upon the high and holy employment of the blood-washed sons of light? How could such rebellious and polluted spirits participate in the heavenly raptures and ceaseless hosannas that thrill the hearts of the countless millions of the redeemed, and swell the symphonies of heaven? Surely an impenitent and polluted soul can have no congeniality of nature or of feeling for heavenly bliss. We must, therefore, repent, or we never can enter the mansions of the blessed.

3. Our last proof for the necessity of repentance is based upon *the express declaration of the word of God.*

"God, that cannot lie," hath declared, "Except ye repent, *ye shall*

all likewise perish." "All men everywhere are commanded to repent." Such, therefore, as refuse to obey this command, can have no hope in a coming day. As certain as God is true, their final doom to endless misery is fixed. God "shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on" impenitent sinners, "who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Thus have we considered the *nature*, the *means*, and the *necessity* of repentance. May the Lord give us "repentance to salvation, not to be repented of." Amen!

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXVI.

Question 1. Does repentance occupy a prominent place in Scripture?
2. Was it taught by the prophets?
3. By John the Baptist?
4. Into what three parts is the chapter divided?
5. What two Greek words of the New Testament are rendered *repent?*
6 What is the meaning of each?
7 Which word is generally used for evangelical repentance in the New Testament?
8. In what two things does evangelical repentance consist?
9. How is it defined by Scott and Watson?
10. Does *conviction* constitute a part of repentance?
11. Does repentance *presuppose* conviction?
12. Does conviction *necessarily* result in repentance?
13. Is *godly sorrow* a part of repentance?
14. To what character is repentance appropriate?
15. What is the connection between repentance, and faith, and regeneration?
16. What is the Calvinistic view?
17. How is it proved that repentance precedes justifying faith and regeneration?
18. Upon what other grounds is the Calvinistic view objectionable?
19. In reference to the *means* of repentance, wherein is there danger of *despair*, and of *presumption?*
20. How is this guarded?
21. What is the first *means* given?
22. What is the second?
23. The third?
24. The fourth?
25. Upon what is the necessity of repentance based?
26. What is the first proof of this?
27. The second?
28. The third?
29. What kind of repentance may we suppose Judas had?
30. What is meant when it is said that the Lord repented?
31. Can an individual repent without *any degree* of faith?
32. Does repentance continue *after justification?*
33. In what sense may a *sanctified person* repent?

CHAPTER XXVII.

FAITH—ITS GENERAL IMPORT—JUSTIFYING FAITH CONSIDERED.

FAITH, the subject now proposed for discussion, is one of the most prominent and important doctrines of the Bible. We find it presented in almost every part of both the Old and New Testament; and it occupies a conspicuous place under the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian dispensations. It appears in the confessions and standards of all Christian denominations, and has been extensively discussed by theological writers in every age. From all these considerations, as well as from the intimate connection between faith and salvation which the Scriptures exhibit, we might be led to infer that it is a subject well understood, and one in reference to which Christians are generally agreed. But such is far from being the case. The discordant systems of theology which men have adopted have produced a great diversity of sentiment on the subject of faith; and many of the different denominations, and perhaps some in all, are either under the influence of sentiments exceedingly erroneous, or have no clear and satisfactory views in reference to this important doctrine.

We propose, in the present chapter, to examine with as much care, and present with as much clearness, as our ability will allow, the various aspects of this doctrine, as exhibited in Holy Writ.

I. WE CONSIDER THE GENERAL IMPORT OF FAITH.

1. The Greek word rendered *faith* in the New Testament is *πίστις*, from the verb *πείθω*, which means *to persuade*. Therefore the proper definition of faith, according to the etymology of the word, is, *belief of the truth;* or, *that persuasion by which a proposition is received as true.* This is the general meaning of the term; and whatever modifications it may receive, or whatever different aspects it may properly assume, the Scriptures themselves must determine. Let it, however, be borne in mind, that the above is the proper meaning of the word; and however much it may be qualified, limited, or extended in signification, according to the peculiar aspect in which the subject may be presented in Scripture, it cannot be understood in any sense contradictory to the

above. It must imply the belief of the truth; but it may imply this to a greater or less degree, and under a diversity of circumstances.

In perfect consistency with the literal meaning of the term, we are furnished with a definition of faith by Paul, in the eleventh chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews: "Now *faith* is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The Greek word *ὑπόστασις*, here rendered *substance*, is, by Macknight and other critics, rendered *confidence;* and we find the same original word in Heb. iii. 14, rendered *confidence* in the common translation. This perfectly accords with the etymological meaning of faith above given—that is, faith is the *belief*, or the *confidence*—the *strong persuasion*—of the truth or reality of things hoped for. In the latter clause of the verse, the word *ἔλεγχος*, rendered *evidence*, is, by many critics, translated *conviction*. It signifies a *strict proof* or *demonstration*. The apostle's definition of faith, therefore, may be stated as follows: *Faith is the strong persuasion and clear demonstration of things hoped for, and of things invisible.*

II. With these remarks concerning the *general definition* of faith, we proceed to *the farther investigation of the doctrine, as presented in the Scriptures.*

1. At the very commencement of the investigation, we are met by a question upon which has originated much controversy among theologians in different ages of the Church—"Is faith the gift of God, or is it the act of the creature?"

This question, which is far from being free from ambiguity in itself, has been thrust forth by many as a kind of talisman for the detection of heresy—as something possessing extraordinary powers, by which the orthodoxy of an individual may at once be tested. And with many persons, assuming high claims to soundness in the faith, what they conceived to be an improper answer to the above question, has furnished legitimate grounds for non-fellowship or excommunication.

We think, however, it will be seen, upon a slight examination, that the question itself needs explanation, before any inference of serious importance can be made from the answer. The proper answer to the question must depend upon the meaning attached to the terms used. The words "gift of God," and "act of the creature," may be taken in a diversity of acceptations. Thus the manna which fed the Israelites in the wilderness, and the rich harvest produced by the field of Boaz, were both the gift of God; but no one can say that they were the "gift of God" in the same sense. In the former case, the gift was absolute and direct from Heaven, without the agency of man. In the latter case, the agency of man was required for the cultivation of the field.

Likewise there are different senses in which a thing may be understood to be "an act of the creature." Thus, what Saul of Tarsus did, when he "held the clothes of them that stoned Stephen," and what the "man with the withered hand" did, when, at the bidding of Christ, he "stretched forth his hand," were both acts of the creature; but no one can say that they were such in the same sense. In the former case, an act was performed in the exercise of the native powers, without the assistance of divine grace. In the latter case, the act was performed by the assistance of divine aid imparted at the time. We will now endeavor to determine in what sense "faith is the gift of God," and in what sense it is "the act of the creature."

2. According to the Antinomian theory, faith is the gift of God in the same sense as was the manna from heaven, above referred to—that is, Antinomians understand that faith is a grace, or a something possessing an abstract existence, as separate and distinct from the existence and operations of the believer as the manna in question was from the existence and operations of the people who gathered and used it. This has been the avowed sentiment of Antinomian Calvinists during the last and present century; and, indeed, it is difficult for any interpretation of the subject, essentially variant from this, to be reconciled with Calvinism even in the mildest forms it has assumed.

An idea so absurd and unscriptural as the above, and which has been so frequently disproved by arguments perfectly unanswerable, requires, on the present occasion, but a brief notice. Suffice it to say that, according to this notion of faith, to call upon men to believe, and to hold them responsible for their unbelief, would be just as consistent with reason and Scripture as to call upon them to stop the planets in their course, and to hold them responsible for the rotation of the seasons.

Such a view of the subject is not only inconsistent with the whole tenor of Scripture, which enjoins upon man the exercise of faith as a duty, but it is irreconcilable with the very nature of faith. What is faith? It is no abstract entity which God has treasured up in the magazines of heaven, to be conveyed down to man without any agency of his, as the olive-leaf was borne to the window of the ark by Noah's dove. Faith has no existence in the abstract. We might as well suppose that there can be thought, without an intelligent being to think, as that faith can exist separate from the agent who believes. Faith is the act of believing: it is an exercise of the mind; and, in the very nature of things, must be dependent on the agency of the believer for its existence.

There is, however, a sense in which we think faith may with propriety be called the gift of God. What we have already said is sufficient to show that it cannot be the gift of God in such sense as to exclude the appropriate means, or the proper agency of man. The doings and the gifts of God may be performed or imparted either directly or indirectly. God may carry on his works, and confer his favors, either directly, by the exertion of his own immediate agency, or indirectly, by the employment of such agencies or instrumentalities as his wisdom may select. Thus the harvest, which has been the product of much toil on the part of the husbandman, is really the gift of God, though not so directly as the manna from heaven, or even "the showers that water the earth." Whatsoever is the result of a merciful arrangement of God, although our own agency may be requisite to our enjoyment of the blessing, is, in an important sense, the gift of God. For example, the sight of external objects results from a merciful arrangement of God, by which the surrounding rays of light are adapted to the organization of the human eye. Thus sight may be called the gift of God, but not so as to exclude human agency; for we may either open or close our eyes at pleasure; we may look upward to the stars or downward to the earth; we may turn to the right or left at will.

Even so, faith results from a merciful arrangement of God, not independent of, but in connection with, the free moral agency of man. It is of God's merciful arrangement that we are presented with a Saviour, the proper object of faith; that we have access to his word and gospel, unfolding the plan of salvation, and exhibiting the subject-matter of faith; that we are presented with the proper evidences of the truth of our holy religion, serving as the ground or reason of our faith; that we have minds and hearts susceptible of divine illumination and gracious influence, enabling us to engage in the exercise of faith; and, lastly, that the gracious influence, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, is vouchsafed unto us, by which we may, in the exercise of the ability which God giveth, in connection with all these privileges, "believe to the salvation of our souls."

In reference to all these particulars, so far as they are connected with, or enter into, the composition of faith, it is properly the gift of God. And as God is the proper "author and finisher of our faith," because it is thus through his merciful arrangement, and by the aid of divine grace imparted, that we are enabled to believe, we may therefore say with propriety that in these acceptations faith is the gift of God. But all this is far from admitting that faith is in no sense the act of the creature. Indeed, that it is the act of the creature in an important

sense, is implied clearly in what we have just presented. For, after all that God has done, man must act—his agency must be put forth, or faith cannot exist. Not that he can of himself do any good thing—his "sufficiency is of God;" but "through Christ strengthening him," he can and must exert an agency in believing. God has never promised to believe for any man; nor can any man ever possess faith till through grace he exercise the ability with which God has endowed him. From what has been said, we think it evident wherein *faith is both the gift of God and the act of the creature.*

It may be objected by some, that, according to the view presented, it is an inaccuracy to term faith the gift of God; for it is only the grace and ability to believe that are the gift of God; and this grace and ability are not faith, but something distinct from it, and from which it results. To which we reply, that although it is true that the grace and ability to believe are not faith, yet, as faith results from the exercise of that grace and ability, and flows from that merciful arrangement of God by which man is enabled to believe, we think there is the same propriety in styling faith the gift of God that there is for so considering the food we eat, and the raiment we put on, for the securing of which our agency in the use of the appropriate means is indispensably requisite.

3. Perhaps after all we have said, some may yet think there are a few passages of Scripture which seem to present faith as the gift of God, to the exclusion of the agency of the creature. The two texts principally relied on for that purpose we will briefly notice. The first is Col. ii. 12, where it is said, "Ye are risen with him through the faith *of the operation of God.*" Here, it is true, faith is said to be "of the operation of God." But does this imply that the agency of the creature is excluded? Surely not. God is said to "work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure;" yet we are commanded to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling." According to the scheme we have presented concerning the connection of the gift of God with the agency of man in the work of faith, these texts are perfectly consistent with each other; but if we interpret the one so as to make faith the gift of God independent of man's agency, the other can only be interpreted in direct opposition.

The next text relied upon is Eph. ii. 8: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Doddridge, and other commentators of the Calvinistic school, take the relative τοῦτο (*that*) to refer to πίστις (*faith*) for its antecedent; and thereby make the apostle to say directly that faith is "the gift of God."

But Chandler, Macknight, Clarke, and many of the best critics, contend that τοῦτο, which is neuter gender, cannot naturally refer to πίστις, which is feminine; but that the antecedent is the preceding part of the sentence, or the salvation spoken of as being "by grace and through faith." Macknight has supplied τὸ πρᾶγμα (*this affair*) as the antecedent—that is, "this salvation by grace and through faith is not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." So that we may be well satisfied that this passage affirms nothing in reference to the question whether faith is the gift of God or not. But even if it did, it cannot invalidate the view of the subject which we have presented; for we have shown wherein it is the gift of God, and wherein it is the act of the creature.

4. The next point which we will present for consideration, is *the progressive nature of faith.*

According to the Scriptures, there are degrees in faith. Faith may not only take a more extensive range in relation to the things embraced, but the degree of confidence with which they are embraced may also be increased. In Matt. vi. 30, our Saviour addresses his disciples, saying, "O ye of *little* faith." In Matt. viii. 10, he says, in reference to the centurion's faith, "I have not found *so great* faith, no, not in Israel." Here "little faith" and "great faith" are both spoken of; hence it must consist of degrees.

In Matt. xvii. 20, the disciples are exhorted to "have faith as a grain of mustard-seed"—clearly implying that, like as that diminutive seed grows to a large tree, so their faith should expand and increase more and more. In Luke xvii. 5, we find the disciples praying, "Lord, *increase* our faith"—clearly implying that it might become greater than it was. In Rom. i. 17, we read: "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed *from faith to faith.*" This can only be understood to mean from one degree of faith to another. In 2 Thess. i. 3, Paul says to his brethren, "Your faith *groweth exceedingly.*" And in 2 Cor. x. 15, the apostle says to his brethren, "But having hope, when your faith *is increased,*" etc. From all which passages the idea is clearly taught that there are degrees in faith; but, as this is a point so plain as scarcely to admit of controversy, we dismiss it without farther comment.

5. We will next consider *the channel through which faith is derived.*

This is the *hearing of the word.* In Rom. x. 14–17, the apostle says: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good

things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then *faith cometh by hearing*, and hearing by the word of God."

The great appositeness of the preceding passage to the point in hand will justify the length of the quotation. That the hearing of the word is the medium of faith, will farther appear from the following passages. In John xvii. 20, our Saviour says: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me *through their word*." John xx. 30, 31: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But *these are written that ye might believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." Many other texts, having the same general bearing, might be added; but the above will show that the hearing of the gospel, or the acquiring of the knowledge of the great truths of God's word, is the appointed channel of saving faith.

6. In the next place, we remark, that faith is not a blind assent of the mind, resting upon no rational foundation; but it is *a well-grounded conviction, and a reasonable confidence, based upon good and sufficient evidence.*

God has never enjoined upon man the duty of faith, without first presenting before him a reasonable foundation for the same. Christ never arbitrarily assumed the prerogatives of the Messiahship, but he appealed for the confirmation of his claims to honorable and weighty testimony; nor are we required to believe the gospel, independent of the evidence it affords of its own divinity.

The proper *ground* or *reason* of faith will appear from the following scriptures:—John x. 37, 38: "If I *do not the works* of my Father, believe me not. But if *I do*, though ye believe not me, *believe the works;* that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him." John v. 36: "But I have greater witness than that of John; for *the works* which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." Acts ii. 22: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know." Heb. ii. 3, 4: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" 2 Pet. i. 16, 17: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you

the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." In all these scriptures, the proper evidences are appealed to as the foundation of faith.

III. We now consider justifying faith. Faith, by theological writers, has been divided into different kinds, such as divine faith, human faith, historical faith, the faith of miracles, justifying faith, etc. A particular explanation of each of these kinds of faith we deem unnecessary, as the terms in which they are expressed are sufficiently explicit.

We will close the present chapter by a special consideration of that faith, which in the gospel is presented as *saving* or *justifying* in its nature. St. Paul declares the gospel to be "the power of God unto salvation to every one *that believeth;*" and he said to the jailer, "*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." These passages clearly exhibit that prominent feature of the gospel—that faith is connected with salvation. The point now before us is to inquire what is implied in that faith.

We know of but two leading views in reference to the nature or degree of the faith in question.

The first is a notion which has found favor with Socinians, Arians, Unitarians, etc., in different ages of the Church; and in modern times, also, with the Rationalists of Germany, and with some New School Presbyterians and some classes of Baptists of the United States. The view referred to is this: *that the faith which the gospel enjoins is simply the assent of the mind, or a mental conviction of the truth of the facts and doctrines of the gospel, resulting from an examination and intellectual apprehension of the evidences of Christianity, without any direct communication of supernatural aid or divine influence, or any trust or reliance of the soul on Christ, farther than what is necessarily implied in the conviction produced in the understanding by rational investigation, that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and that the gospel is true.*

The other view upon this subject is that which has been advocated by the great body of orthodox Christians in all ages. It embraces all that is implied in the preceding definition, together with *a special trust or reliance of the soul on Christ for salvation, farther than what is implied in the simple assent of the understanding.*

The former view, it will be perceived, reduces the exercise of faith to a mere intellectual process; the latter, in addition to this, requires a trust or reliance of the heart. The vital importance of settling this

question correctly must be apparent to every one. It is intimately connected with the salvation of the soul. A mistake here may be fatal; and certainly no one can be interested in being in error where so much is at stake. We think the honest inquirer after truth may easily find in the inspired volume a satisfactory decision on the point at issue.

1. Our first argument on this point is based upon what is said in reference to *the faith of devils.*

St. James, in speaking of a dead, inoperative faith, which can only imply the assent of the understanding to the truth of Scripture, says: "The devils also *believe* and tremble." In accordance with this is the language of a devil, when our Lord was about to expel him from the man possessed: "I *know thee* who thou art; the Holy One of God." Thus it appears that, so far as theoretical faith is concerned, the devils are possessed of faith; and if the gospel only required of men the belief of the truth with the understanding, it would but enjoin the faith of devils; but as we suppose none will admit that the faith which justifies the sinner is such as devils possess, we infer that justifying faith must imply more than the bare assent of the understanding. If gospel faith be the assent of the understanding only, we may with propriety ask, who is a stronger believer than Satan himself?

2. It appears from the Scriptures that many were convinced in their *understandings* of the Messiahship of Christ, and of the truth of the gospel, who, nevertheless, did not "believe to the saving of their souls."

As instances of such, we might name Nicodemus and Simon Magus. We have the faith of the former in the following orthodox confession: "We *know* that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do *these miracles* that thou doest, except God be with him." Here, so far as the mere mental conviction of the truth is concerned, it would be difficult to invalidate the faith of Nicodemus. He acknowledged the divinity of the Saviour's mission, and he based his faith on the proper evidence—"the miracles" the Saviour performed. Yet he was not saved; for the Saviour declares unto him, "Ye must be born again."

And what can we think of Simon Magus? In the eighth chapter of The Acts, we learn that "Simon himself *believed* also," and "was baptized"—that is, he "believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ." Yet, immediately afterward, he is said to have "neither part nor lot in the matter;" but to be "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Yet there is no charge brought against the character of his belief; it is not intimated that his mind was not informed in reference to the character and claims of Christ; or that his understanding was not convinced of the

truth of what he had heard. The charge affects not his understanding, or his reasoning, but his moral character. The apostle declares: "Thy *heart* is not right in the sight of God." The defect was evidently in the heart, and not in the head. So far as the mere assent of the understanding is concerned, it does not appear that there was any defect in the faith of Nicodemus or Simon Magus; but, as neither of them believed "to the saving of the soul," we fairly infer that gospel faith implies more than a mental conviction of the truth from the force of testimony. The *head* may be as orthodox, and at the same time the *heart* as wicked, as Satan himself.

3. *The Scriptures explicitly present justifying faith as implying trust or reliance, as well as mental assent.*

Ps. xxii. 4: "Our fathers *trusted* in thee: they *trusted*, and thou didst deliver them." This is evidently the character of the faith by which "the elders obtained a good report." Again, St. Paul says: "With the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness"—clearly implying that faith reaches beyond the mere intellect, and lays hold on the moral powers. In Eph. i. 12, we read: "That we should be to the praise of his glory who first *trusted* in Christ," etc. Here the apostle is evidently speaking of embracing Christ by saving faith, and he expresses it by the word trust—implying more than the cold assent of the mind. Rom. iii. 25: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." "It is not surely that we may merely believe that the death of Christ is a sacrifice for sin, that he is set forth as a propitiation, but that we may trust in its efficacy. It is not that we may merely believe that God has made promises to us, that his merciful engagements in our favor are recorded, but that we may have confidence in them, and thus be supported by them. This was the faith of the saints of the Old Testament. 'By faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a place, which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went.' His faith was confidence. 'Though he slay me, yet will I *trust* in him.' 'Who is among you that feareth the Lord? let him *trust* in the name of the Lord, and *stay* upon his God.' 'Blessed is the man that *trusteth* in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.' It is under this notion of trust that faith is continually represented to us also in the New Testament. 'In his name shall the Gentiles trust.' 'For, therefore, we both labor and suffer reproach, because we *trust* in the living God,' etc. 'For I know whom I have believed,' (trusted,) etc. 'If we hold the beginning of our *confidence* steadfast unto the end.'" (Watson's Institutes.)

4. In the last place, we remark, that the notion that saving, or justifying, faith implies no more than the assent of the understanding resulting from the force of testimony, is encumbered by *serious difficulties*, in view of reason, experience, and the general tenor of revelation.

(1) From this doctrine it would follow, either that all whose judgments are convinced of the truth of Christianity, by Christ and his apostles, immediately embrace salvation, or some genuine believers are not saved. The former position is contrary to the historic fact; the latter is contrary to the gospel promise.

(2) This doctrine appears to be inconsistent with the depravity and the native inability of man to do any thing toward salvation, without divine grace imparted. For if faith be the condition of salvation, as all admit, and if it be the natural result of a mental exercise in the examination of testimony, then it will follow that, as man can exercise his intellect at pleasure, independent of aid from divine influence, he may believe of himself, and be saved by the mere exercise of his natural powers. According to this idea, to pray for faith, or for the increase of faith, would be absurd; for all that would be necessary would be an increase of diligence in the study of the evidences of Christianity, which might be effected as well without prayer as with it.

(3) Again: this view of the subject would imply that no man can examine the evidences of Christianity so as to perceive their force, and study the doctrines of revelation so as to gain a general theoretical knowledge of their character, without being an evangelical believer or genuine Christian. This is contrary to the experience of thousands. To say that no man in Christendom has ever examined the evidences of Christianity, so as to arrive at the satisfactory conclusion in his mind that the gospel is true, except such as have embraced salvation, is to manifest a far greater regard for a favorite theory than for the plain testimony of experience, observation, and Scripture.

The great Bible truth is, that man is a being possessed of moral as well as intellectual powers. He has a heart as well as a head; and God requires both in the exercise of evangelical faith. That faith which has its seat in the *head*, without reaching the *heart*, will never reform the life or save the soul. It will be as "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal;" it may embrace "the form," but will be destitute of "the power" of religion. The faith which consists in the assent of the understanding alone is the "dead faith" spoken of by St. James, which includes no works of obedience. The faith which, passing through the understanding, fixes its seat deep in the heart, and trusts or relies on

Christ for present salvation, is that faith which alone can justify and save a sinful soul.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXVII.

QUESTION 1. Is faith a prominent subject in Scripture?
2. Is it a subject well understood?
3. What is its etymological meaning?
4. What is implied in St. Paul's definition?
5. In what sense is faith the *gift of God?*
6. In what sense is it the *act of the creature?*
7. In what sense do Antinomians hold this subject?
8. How is their notion disproved?
9. In what sense is God the author of faith?
10. Name some of the principal texts relied on in favor of the Antinomian view.
11. How are they explained?
12. Are there degrees in faith?
13. How is this proved?
14. Through what channel is faith derived?
15. How is this proved?
16. Upon what ground, or foundation, is faith based?
17. How is this proved from Scripture?
18. How have theologians divided faith?
19. What are the two leading views in reference to the nature of justifying faith?
20. By whom has the *first* been adopted?
21. Who have adopted the *second?*
22. How can it be proved that saving faith implies more than mental assent?
23. What serious difficulties encumber the opposite theory?

CHAPTER XXVIII.

JUSTIFICATION—ITS NATURE CONSIDERED

THE inquiry upon which we are now about to enter is of the deepest interest to all mankind. How may a fallen sinner recover from the miseries of his lapsed state? This was substantially the question propounded with so much feeling by the convicted jailer to the imprisoned apostles: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And from the earliest ages there may be seen, in the history of all nations, evidences of the general concern of the wisest and most serious of mankind for a satisfactory knowledge of a certain and adequate remedy for the evils of the present state.

The best informed among the heathen have generally exhibited some correct notions in reference to the connection between natural and moral evil. In their zealous pursuit of some mode of escape from the miseries and calamities "that flesh is heir to," they have generally adopted the principle, that natural evil is the effect of moral evil. Hence their systems of philosophy and morals, their rigorous discipline and painful austerities, adopted and pursued with the vain hope that by these means they could eradicate from the soul the principle of evil, destroy the dominion of vice, and, by a restoration of the disordered moral faculties of man, prepare him for the enjoyment of pure and uninterrupted felicity. But every effort of human reason and philosophy to discover a mode of deliverance from the thraldom of sin, however flattering it may have appeared for a season, has terminated in disappointment or despair.

The light of nature may exhibit in its huge deformity the disease of sin; but an adequate remedy it has never been able to descry. It can lead man to the contemplation of what he is; it can show him his sinful and miserable condition, and teach him to sigh over his misfortunes; but it can never unfold the scheme of redemption, and teach him to smile at the prospect of a blissful immortality. To supply this grand *desideratum*, revelation comes to our aid. God alone was able to devise, and he has condescended to make known, the plan by which "he

can be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." In the present chapter, we propose a consideration of the Bible doctrine of JUSTIFICATION.

In discussing this subject, there are two leading inquiries naturally presenting themselves to view. First, What is implied in justification? Secondly, How may it be obtained? We will consider these questions in their order.

In this chapter, we will consider *what is implied in justification.*

The Greek word rendered justification in the New Testament, is *δικαίωσις*, which means *a judicial decision*, or *sentence of acquittal.* The verb is *δικάζω*, which means *to judge, to render sentence, pronounce just*, etc. According to the etymology of the word, *to justify*, in the Bible acceptation, is *to acquit by a judicial sentence or decision.*

I. The term is evidently FORENSIC, *having reference to law and judicial proceedings.* There are, however, several different senses in which it may be taken. Referring to justification in a forensic sense, we would observe, that it may take place in three different ways.

1. A person may be arraigned at the bar of justice to answer to a specific accusation; but, upon the examination of the testimony, it may appear that he has not been guilty of the thing alleged against him: here he is justified by *the force of testimony*, and a correct administration will announce the decision accordingly.

2. After the arraignment of a person before the bar of justice, to answer to a certain accusation, it may appear, in the investigation of the case, that, although the special charge alleged against him may be established by the evidence, it nevertheless is not contrary to the law: here he is justified by *the force of law*, and a correct administration will pronounce the sentence accordingly.

3. A person may be arraigned at the bar of justice, tried and condemned for a crime; yet the executive power of the government may remit the penalty: here he is justified on *the principle of pardon.*

According to any of these three plans, a person may be justified in a civil sense. But in the scriptural acceptation of the subject, agreeably to what has already been established in reference to the fallen and guilty condition of all mankind, it is impossible that any can be justified on either the first or second hypothesis; for all men stand justly charged with, and condemned for, the violation of God's holy law. "All are concluded under sin;" and the Bible declares that "all have sinned;" and that "all the world are guilty before God." Therefore, if justification ever be obtained by any, it must be *on the ground of* PARDON. Here is the only door of hope to a guilty world.

II. But we must inquire more particularly concerning *the nature of that justification, on the ground of pardon, which the Scriptures develop.*

"Justification, in common language, signifies a vindication from any charge which affects the moral character; but in theology it is used for the acceptance of one by God who is, and confesses himself to be, guilty. 'To justify a sinner,' says Mr. Bunting, in an able sermon on this important subject, 'is to account and consider him relatively righteous; and to deal with him as such, notwithstanding his past unrighteousness, by clearing, absolving, discharging, and releasing him from various penal evils, and especially from the wrath of God, and the liability to eternal death, which by that past unrighteousness he had deserved; and by accepting him as if just, and admitting him to the state, the privileges, and the rewards of righteousness.' Hence it appears that justification, and the remission, or forgiveness of sin, are substantially the same thing." (Watson's Bib. Dic.)

We here insert the definition of justification as given in the Ninth Article of Religion in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church: "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings; wherefore that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort."

With the above general definition of justification before us, we now proceed to a more minute examination of its most important particulars.

1. We will show from the Scriptures that *justification means pardon, or the remission of sin.*

This will appear from the following scriptures:—Acts xiii. 38, 39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you *the forgiveness of sins;* and by him all that believe are *justified* from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Rom. iii. 25, 26: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness *for the remission of sins* that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just, and *the justifier* of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. iv. 5–8: "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that *justifieth the ungodly,* his faith is counted for righteousness; even as David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose *iniquities are forgiven,* and whose *sins are covered:* blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

In these quotations, "justification," "the forgiveness of sins," "the remission of sins," and the "non-imputation of sin," are all used as convertible terms—exegetical of each other; hence, in Scripture language, they are generally synonymous. This leading position here established, will be found to extend throughout the New Testament, wherever the subject of justification is presented, and bearing it in mind will tend greatly to facilitate the investigation.

2. We proceed to remark, *that justification is not an abrogation of law, by the exercise of prerogative.*

The covenant of redemption given to man after the Fall, though different from, is not contradictory to, the covenant of works, under which he was primarily placed. The language of the covenant of works was, "Do this, and live;" its condition was, perfect and perpetual obedience. The language of the covenant of redemption is, "Believe, and be saved;" its condition is, "Faith which worketh by love." The propounding of the covenant of redemption does not imply the abrogation of the law of God as originally delivered to man; but only a suspension of its rigor, in perfect consistency with the honor of God, so as to admit a substitute instead of the actual culprits. But the fact that a substitute was at all required, is sufficient evidence that the law is not abrogated, but rather established—it is "magnified, and made honorable." Although the law be suspended in relation to the full and immediate execution of the penalty denounced against man, yet it is not suspended in reference to Christ. He met the claims of justice, and made satisfaction. Therefore it is clear that justification implies no abrogation of law. It is not an arbitrary process, by which the guilty are pardoned and released at the expense of justice; but a wise and gracious arrangement, by which "God can be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

3. *Justification is personal in its character.*

It is a sentence of acquittal, having respect to particular individuals; and in this respect is distinct from the general arrangement of mercy, by which all mankind are so far redeemed from the curse of the broken law as to be graciously placed under the covenant of redemption, so as to have the offer of eternal life, according to gospel terms. The placing of all men in a salvable state, under the covenant of grace, is a merciful legislative arrangement of God, in which a general promise is made and a general condition required. Justification is a judicial decision of God, under that gracious legislation in reference to particular individuals, in view of the prescribed conditions having been complied with. "Justification presupposeth a particular person, a particular cause, a

condition performed, and the performance, as already past, pleaded; and the decision proceeds accordingly."

4. *Justification is a work really performed—a sentence or decision that actually is passed upon individuals.*

The Antinomian notion, therefore, of "eternal justification," is manifestly absurd. If it be a decision or sentence at all, it must take place in time. A mere purpose in the mind of a judge, is no sentence. "A sentence is pronounced; and a sentence pronounced and declared from eternity, before man was created, when no sin had been committed, no law published, no Saviour promised, no faith exercised—when, in a word, no being existed but God himself—is not only absurd, but impossible; for it would have been a decision declared to none, and therefore not declared at all; and if, as they say, the 'sentence was passed in eternity, but manifested in time,' it might from thence be as rightly argued that the world was created from eternity, and that the work of creation in the beginning of time was only a manifestation of that which was from everlasting. It is the *guilty* who are pardoned—'He justifieth the ungodly;' guilt, therefore, precedes pardon; while that remains, so far are any from being justified, that they are 'under wrath,' in a state of 'condemnation,' with which a state of justification cannot consist; for the contradiction is palpable; so that the advocates of this wild notion must either give up justification in eternity, or a state of condemnation in time. If they hold the former, they contradict common sense; if they deny the latter, they deny the Scriptures." (Watson's Institutes.)

5. Justification being *the pardon of sin, it is not a work by which we are made actually just or righteous.*

Justification changes our relation to law—it removes condemnation, but does not change our nature, or make us holy. "This is sanctification, (or, in its incipient state, regeneration,) which is, indeed, the immediate fruit of justification; but, nevertheless, is a distinct gift of God, and of a totally different nature. The one implies what God does for us through his Son; the other, what God works in us by his Spirit. So that, although some rare instances may be found wherein the terms justified and justification are used in so wide a sense as to include sanctification also, yet in general use they are sufficiently distinguished from each other both by St. Paul and the other inspired writers." (Wesley's Sermons.)

6. Keeping in view the definition given — that justification means the pardon of sin—it will be easy to distinguish between this blessing and *regeneration*, which is properly sanctification begun The one

removes the guilt of past sin by pardon, the other "creates us anew in Christ Jesus," that we "may go in peace, and sin no more." But we are not to understand, from the fact of our pardon, that God views our past sins in a more favorable light than he did previously to our justification. Pardon cannot change their real nature. Still they are sins; and as such, are an abomination to the Lord. Nor can his immaculate nature view them in any other than their true character. The crime of a culprit is none the less from the fact that he has been pardoned.

Pardon releases from punishment, but does not change either the character of the crime or of the criminal. A pardoned sinner is still viewed as having sinned, though saved by grace. His sins, considered in themselves, still deserve the wrath of God; but for Christ's sake that punishment is remitted. Hence, when we use the word *acquittal* in connection with justification, we understand thereby, *merely release or exemption from punishment*, without changing in the least the nature of past sin, or the light in which it is contemplated in the abstract by the Divine Mind.

By no fiction of law can we suppose that God ever looks upon sin as not being sin, or the sinner as never having sinned, because pardon has been vouchsafed. Indeed, the very nature of pardon requires that there be something rendering that pardon necessary. Were it otherwise, we might suppose the pardon to be forfeited by the sinner with impunity; for if the nature of his sins and his own character have been so changed that God can no longer view the sinner as having sinned, or his sins as being offensive in their nature, the sinner can derive no benefit from the pardon; nor could it be possible, under this view, for such a thing as pardon to exist.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXVIII.

QUESTION 1. Have the nations of the earth generally manifested any concern in reference to their deliverance from sin and the miseries of life?

2. How does this appear?

3. What has been the success of their schemes?

4. What grand *desideratum* does revelation supply?

5. Give the etymology of justification.

6. In what three different ways may a man be justified in a civil sense.

7. Why can no one, in a Scripture sense, be justified on either the first or second plan?

8 What does justification mean, as defined by Watson?

9 What is the definition given in the Methodist Discipline?

10. What is implied in justification, according to the Scriptures?

11. How is this shown?

12. How is it shown that justification does not imply the abrogation of law?

13. How does it appear that justification is *personal?*

14. How does it appear that justification is a sentence actually passed?

15. How does this consist with the notion of *eternal justification?*

16. Does justification make us *actually* righteous?

17 How is it distinguished from regeneration and sanctification?

CHAPTER XXIX.

JUSTIFICATION—FALSE THEORIES REFUTED—JUSTIFICATION BY THE IMPUTATION OF CHRIST'S ACTIVE OBEDIENCE CONSIDERED.

HAVING discussed the nature of justification, we now proceed to consider the *method by which it is to be obtained.* Among those who profess to be guided by the Scriptures, there are several different methods or plans by which this blessing is said to be realized.

1. Justification is said to be by the imputation of Christ's active righteousness or obedience.

2. It is said to be by the imputation of Christ's active and passive righteousness or obedience, taken together.

3. It is said to be by works alone.

4. It is said to be by faith and works united, or taken together.

5. It is said to be by faith alone.

The last scheme is the one we believe to be taught in the Scriptures; but we will examine each of them in the order just stated.

I. *Justification is said to be by the imputation of Christ's active righteousness or obedience.*

This scheme has been advocated by high Calvinists, and lies at the foundation of Antinomianism. By it we are taught that Christ's personal obedience to the moral law of God is so imputed to the sinner as to be accounted his own, and that he is thereby justified in view of his having kept the moral law in Christ. Those who advocate this theory do not reject faith as being altogether unnecessary under the gospel; they hold that it flows from a justified state, as an effect from a cause, and is the manifestation, or evidence, of justification. But they reject faith, and every thing else, as having any thing to do in justification, except the personal and active obedience of Christ to the moral law, imputed to the sinner as though he himself had thus obeyed. That this scheme is unscriptural and absurd, must be clearly obvious to such as will carefully weigh the following considerations:

1. *It is perfectly gratuitous, there being not a single text in the Bible to which we can appeal as having announced any such doctrine.*

It is true that it is said, in reference to Messiah, Jer. xxiii. 6: "And this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." And St. Paul, in 1 Cor. i. 30, says that Christ "of God is made unto us wisdom, and *righteousness*, and sanctification, and redemption."

In reference to these passages we remark, 1. There is no evidence that Christ's personal righteousness is here referred to at all—it is rather "his obedience unto *death*, even *the death of the cross*." 2. It is neither here asserted that Christ's righteousness shall be ours, nor that it shall be imputed to us. Only it is said, "The name by which he shall be called is, The Lord our Righteousness;" and, "He shall be made unto us righteousness," etc. The plain meaning is, that he is the source, or fountain, from which our righteousness or justification is derived. But this is vastly different from saying that his keeping of the moral law is imputed to us, or to be acknowledged instead of our having kept it. Christ is said to be "the resurrection," "our life," "our peace," etc. But surely we must not hence infer that his rising from the dead, his living, and his possession of peace, are to be imputed to us as though we had done these things in him, and had no right to any farther resurrection, life, or peace! And yet the argument is precisely the same in this and the former case. Indeed, the entire notion that Christ was our representative in such close sense that what he did or suffered we did or suffered in him, is flatly contradictory to the whole tenor of Scripture on the subject. It is nowhere said that we obeyed or suffered in Christ; but the language is, "He suffered for us." The Scripture doctrine is, not that we obeyed in Christ, but that, through "his obedience unto death," our disobedience is forgiven.

2. *This scheme involves a fiction and impossibility, nowhere countenanced in Scripture, and irreconcilable with the divine attributes.*

An all-wise and holy God must view things as they really are. He never can consider one person as having performed an act, and at the same time as not having performed it. For the all-wise and holy One to consider any thing as being what it is not, or to consider any person as having done what he never did, is perfectly impossible and clearly absurd.

I know it has been argued that there is no more absurdity implied in the active righteousness of Christ being imputed to us, than there is in our sins being imputed to him. But, we ask, in what sense are our sins imputed to Christ? Surely not in reference to the formality of fact. Some have even gone so far on this subject as almost to assume the attitude of blasphemy. It has been even said that "Christ was the greatest sinner that ever lived." This they drew as a necessary conclusion

from the principle which they had assumed—that all the sins of the whole world were so imputed to Christ, that, in the mind of God, he was considered to have actually committed them.

In reference to such as have thus reasoned, we would say, at least, that their logic is better than their divinity. For, according to the principle assumed, the conclusion, shocking as it certainly is, would be perfectly legitimate. But the position is an absurd and inconsistent fiction. The sins of the world were never imputed to Christ with the formality of the fact, so that the Almighty looked upon Christ as actually having committed them, or upon them as being formally and in fact his sins. They were only imputed to him in reference to their penalty. The sins were not made his, nor considered as such; but he endured the penalty due them—he suffered for them. Indeed, to suppose that they were made or considered his in the formality of the fact, would be to say that he suffered for his own sins, and not for the sins of others. It would overturn the vicarious nature of his death, and at the same time destroy the necessity of pardon. For if all the sins of the whole world were imputed to Christ as his sins, they cannot still be considered as the sins of the world; they, by this absurd fiction, have been passed over to Christ; and if so, they cannot still be considered as the sins of the world, as they were previously to the supposed imputation; and consequently there are no sins left upon the world to be pardoned; for certainly I cannot need pardon, nor can the law punish me, for that crime which it does not consider as mine.

But *this entire position is absurd and unscriptural to the very center.*

3. The Almighty never could have considered the sins of the world so imputed to Christ as to be his; for we hear a "voice from the excellent glory, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom *I am well pleased.*" In no sense could he be considered a sinner; but "the iniquity of all was laid upon him"—that is, the punishment which it deserved. Hence it now appears that, as the sins of the world were not imputed to Christ so as to be considered his, we cannot infer therefrom that the active and personal obedience of Christ is imputed to us so as to be considered ours in the proper sense, as though performed by us. As our sins were imputed to him in reference to the *penalty*, so his "obedience unto death" is imputed to us in reference to its *benefits*. This is the plain scriptural presentation of the subject. The Antinomian hypothesis, that God justifies the sinner by imputing to him the obedience of Christ to the moral law, and considering him as having thus obeyed in Christ, is only an idle dream, without reason or Scripture for its support, involving an absurd fiction, irreconcilable with the divine character.

"The judgment of the all-wise God is always according to truth; neither can it ever consist with his unerring wisdom to think that I am innocent, to judge that I am righteous or holy, because another is so. He can no more confound me with Christ than with David or Abraham." (Wesley.)

Again: "If what our Lord was and did is to be accounted to us in the sense just given, then we must be accounted never to have sinned, because Christ never sinned, and yet we must ask for pardon, though we are accounted from birth to death to have fulfilled God's law in Christ; or if they should say that when we ask for pardon we ask only for a revelation to us of our eternal justification or pardon, the matter is not altered; for what need is there of pardon, in time or eternity, if we are accounted to have perfectly obeyed God's holy law? and why should we be accounted also to have suffered in Christ the penalty of sins which we are accounted never to have committed?" (Watson's Institutes.)

Thus it is clear that the different parts of this monstrous fiction fight with each other. If, by the above kind of imputation, we transfer Christ's personal righteousness to us, his sufferings for us are useless, and pardon is not needed. If our sins are, as above, imputed to him, then he suffered, not "for our sins," but for his own; and the Bible becomes a book of silly dreams, or absurd and inconsistent fictions.

4. This scheme of justification by the imputation of Christ's personal obedience to the moral law, *is irreconcilable with the character of Christ's personal acts, and could not furnish us a righteousness adapted to our condition.*

The supposition is, that all that Christ did in his proper person is to be set to our account, or imputed to us as ours, so as to weave out a robe of perfect obedience exactly suited to our case. If, upon a comparison of his personal acts of obedience, or his righteousness, with the description of righteousness, or the peculiar kind of moral obedience, required at our hands, it be found that the righteousness of Christ contains more than we need, the robe thus woven for us will be found to be more than our strength may be able to bear; but, on the other hand, if, upon the comparison, it appear that the righteousness of Christ, or the obedience he rendered to the moral law, contains less than we need, the robe thus woven for us will not be sufficient to shelter our guilty heads from the sword of justice. Either a redundancy or a deficiency, or a redundancy in some respects and a deficiency in others, will evidence such an unsuitableness in this plan of justification as should cause us seriously to suspect that it is a plan of our own devising, and not the Heaven-stamped

method arranged by Infinite Wisdom for the justification of "the ungodly."

Now, in turning our attention to this subject, we think it will be readily perceived that, while the righteousness of Christ, as above claimed by imputation, will be found to contain too much, in some respects, in other respects it will contain too little, to meet our exigencies.

The greatest portion of the personal acts of Christ were of a very peculiar kind, such as never were, and never could be, appropriate to any being in the universe but himself. He appeared in our world in the peculiar character of God-man Mediator, and took upon himself the regalia of Prophet, Priest, and King, in a peculiar and exalted sense; and in the performance of the duties, and the exercise of the prerogatives, of his official character, he went forth "traveling in the greatness of his strength," to do the will of Him that had sent him, in the accomplishment of the stupendous work of the world's redemption, exhibiting in his sublime career a train of magnificent doings and godlike achievements, calculated at once to strike with awe and fill with amazement both heaven and earth. Will a mortal man indulge in aspirations so lofty, as to pretend that all these personal acts of the Saviour's active obedience are, in the divine mind, considered as having been performed by us, that thereby we may be furnished with a robe of perfect obedience, and thus stand justified before God? Surely actions like these, a righteousness of this peculiar and exalted kind, was never required at our hands: it contains vastly too much, and is far too exalted in its character, to be appropriate to our condition. "He, then, that assumeth this righteousness to himself," says Goodwin, "and appareleth himself with it, represents himself before God, not in the habit of a just or righteous man, but in the glorious attire of the great Mediator of the world, whose righteousness hath heights and depths in it, a length and breadth, which infinitely exceed the proportions of all men whatever. Now, then, for a silly worm to take this robe of immeasurable majesty upon him, and to conceit himself as great in holiness and righteousness as Jesus Christ, (for that is the spirit that rules in this opinion, to teach men to assume all that Christ did unto themselves, and that in no other way, nor upon any lower terms, than if themselves had personally done it,) whether this be right, I leave to sober men to consider." (Treatise on Justification.)

As we have seen, the personal righteousness of Christ, in one sense, is too exalted, and contains vastly too much, to be adapted to our condition, so, in another sense, it contains too little. Infinitely perfect as the moral and personal obedience of Christ was, as pertaining to his own

immaculate character, yet, if we attempt to substitute it for that obedience to moral law which duty enjoins upon us, we should perceive it, in a variety of particulars, not suited to our case.

There are many circumstances and relations in life which never pertained to the Saviour, requiring the performance of peculiar moral obligations. These obligations which rest upon us, and in the neglect of which the law will hold us guilty, the Saviour never performed. Of this class, we might mention parental and conjugal obligations, the reciprocal obligations between master and servant, and magisterial and official duties of various kinds. Here we find not only an endless variety of items under a particular class, but entire classes of duties, which the Saviour was never in a situation to perform. Can he who is deficient in his righteousness in any of these particulars, plead the perfect obedience of Christ? Can the parent or the master who is delinquent in reference to the peculiar duties of that relation, refer to the moral obedience of Christ, and find, in the history of his life, the discharge of the specific obligation with the neglect of which he stands charged? Surely not.

We know it may be urged that, although the personal righteousness of Christ be wanting in reference to many particulars pertaining to us, yet it was perfect as a whole; there was no defect in it, so far as his own moral character was concerned; and this obedience, which was perfect in the aggregate, may be imputed in the aggregate to us.

In reply to this, we would say, that the strictness of law can admit no such fulfillment in the aggregate. The legal requirements are specific; and the sentence against the delinquent is equally particular and minute. In righteousness based upon pardon in view of satisfaction rendered, there may be admitted as satisfaction something equivalent to, though in some respects different from, what the law required; but where righteousness is claimed upon the ground of actual fulfillment of law, to plead the equivalency of one action, or of one course of duties, to another, is perfectly inadmissible. The law can admit no such commutation, but must exact perfect conformity to every jot and tittle of its precepts; and he that "offends in one is guilty of all."

Thus it appears that justification cannot be based on the personal righteousness of Christ imputed to us as our own; because in some respects it contains too much, and in other respects too little, to be appropriate to our peculiar exigencies.

5. Next, we observe that this scheme of justification is objectionable, *because it bases the whole matter upon actual obedience to the moral law,*

instead of placing it on the ground of pardon, in view of the meritorious death of Christ, as the Scriptures expressly teach.

(1) That the scheme of justification in question is fatally defective, for the reason just stated, will be obvious when we reflect that there is no Bible truth more prominently and explicitly recognized than this that our salvation is to be attributed to the Saviour's "obedience unto death." Now, if we ground our justification on Christ's personal obedience to the moral law, it will be, not a comment on the plan of salvation as clearly revealed in the Bible, but an invention of our own. Is it not to be regretted, if men must invent divinity, that they do not, at least, invent something less inconsistent and absurd in itself? The Scriptures nowhere attribute our justification to the moral purity of the Saviour's life. This personal obedience to moral precept was essential, that he might present an example for our imitation; and also for the perfection of his own character, that he might be prepared to offer on the cross, for the sins of the world, a sacrifice "without blemish and without spot." But it is no more to be considered as the direct ground of our justification than the obedience of Abraham or of Paul.

(2) Indeed, this scheme proposes for man righteousness of a kind which it is utterly impossible for him ever to possess. Legal righteousness, or justification in view of law, must be one of two kinds—that is, it must either be based upon perfect obedience, or satisfaction. When once the law is broken, perfect obedience is out of the question. There is, then, no possible chance for justification in the sight of law, but by satisfaction It will be like "placing new cloth in an old garment" the breach must first be healed by satisfaction. After the first covenant had been broken, the law no longer demanded perfect obedience; that had been forever set aside by transgression: the demand then was for the execution of the penalty, or satisfaction for the breach. Christ satisfied for the breach, not by keeping the moral precepts, but by "giving his life a ransom for many."

There is a twofold righteousness or justification—*primary* and *ultimate*. The former consists in perfect obedience to law; the latter in satisfaction for the breach of law. Justification in the former sense rests on the fact that we cannot be charged with having violated the command; justification in the latter sense rests upon the fact that, though the law has been broken, satisfaction has been rendered. None can be justified by the same law, and in reference to the same actions, in both these senses, at the same time; for when the law has been kept, satisfaction can have no room. Now the justification presented in the gospel must be of one or the other of these kinds. If we are justified by per-

fect obedience, then we can admit no breach of law, and of course can neither plead satisfaction nor ask for pardon. If we plead satisfaction rendered, or ask for pardon, we thereby confess our guilt, and renounce justification on the ground of perfect obedience.

(3) Again: justification cannot be by the personal obedience of Christ; for the law did not demand the obedience of another for us, but our own obedience. But even if we could admit that we had perfectly kept the law in Christ, yet we could not then be justified on the ground of perfect obedience; for still we have sinned in ourselves, and for this the law would still have its demands upon us.

On the subject in hand, we quote the following from an acute writer: "If our sins have been expiated by the obedience of the life of Christ, either a perfect expiation has been thus made for all of them, or an imperfect one for some of them. The first cannot be asserted, for then it would follow that Christ had died in vain; for, as he died to expiate our sins, he would not have accounted it necessary to offer such an expiation for them, if they had been already expiated by the obedience of his life. And the latter cannot be maintained, because Christ has yielded perfect obedience to the law of God; wherefore, if he have performed that for the expiation of our sins, he must necessarily, through that obedience, have expiated all of them perfectly." (Piscator.)

But hear the language of St. Paul on this subject:—Gal. ii. 21: "If righteousness be by the law, then *Christ died in vain.*" This whole scheme of justification by the active obedience of Christ drives necessarily to the dreadful consequence here presented by the apostle. It allows no adequate reason whatever for the death of Christ. The apostle argues that justification by the law renders nugatory the death of Christ. And what, we ask, is this scheme of the imputed active obedience of Christ, but justification by law? Even if we admit that the moral law kept by the Saviour was different from that law spoken of by the apostle when he discards justification by the law, the argument will only be the stronger for that admission; for if justification by the Mosaic law renders the death of Christ unnecessary, how much more must justification by that superior law which the Saviour kept render the death of Christ unnecessary! The argument is plain and simple: if we are perfectly justified in the active moral obedience of Christ, we can need no more.

(4) Again: this scheme confounds the two covenants, and makes the covenant of grace, in every particular, the same as the covenant of works; or, in other words, it denies that there is such a thing as the

covenant of grace, and puts man under the same law, and requires the same mode of justification, before the Fall and under the gospel.

From the arguments which we have briefly sketched, we think it clear that a fallen sinner can never be justified by the imputation of Christ's active obedience. This Antinomian scheme must be renounced as unscriptural and absurd; and we must look to some other quarter for that acquittal in the sight of God from our sin and guilt which alone can fit us for the enjoyment of happiness. The various other methods of justification already named, we must reserve for a future chapter. On a subject of so much importance, we should endeavor to investigate with diligence and care, at the same time relying upon the teachings of Scripture, and invoking the illuminations of the Spirit.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXIX.

QUESTION 1. What five different plans of justification have been presented?
2. Which contains the truth?
3. What is the first argument against justification by the imputation of Christ's active obedience?
4. What is the second?
5. How is the argument illustrated?
6. What is the third?
7. How is it illustrated?
8. What is the fourth, and how is it illustrated?
9. How does it appear that this scheme confounds the two covenants?
10. Who have been the advocates of this scheme?
11. Have they rejected faith altogether?
12. What two kinds of righteousness are described?
13. How does it appear that they cannot consist together?
14. How does it appear that no man can be justified by the former?

CHAPTER XXX.

JUSTIFICATION — FALSE THEORIES REFUTED — JUSTIFICATION BY CHRIST'S ACTIVE AND PASSIVE OBEDIENCE TAKEN TOGETHER, CONSIDERED.

In the preceding chapter, we proceeded so far in the investigation of the different methods of justification which have been advocated, as to examine, and, as we believe, show the absurdity of, the scheme which teaches justification by the imputation of the active obedience of Christ.

The *second* method to be examined is, *that which proposes justification by the imputation of Christ's active and passive obedience, taken together.*

I. We notice *the sense in which this doctrine has been taught.*

1. This is the scheme maintained by Calvin himself; and the great body of those since designated as Calvinists, have, in this particular, followed in his footsteps. That class of Calvinists, however, distinguished as high Calvinists, as well as those called Antinomians, have contended strenuously for the scheme of justification by the imputation of Christ's personal righteousness, which we have already considered.

The scheme of Calvin, which we now propose to examine, differs from the Antinomian plan, as set forth in the preceding chapter, in but one particular—that is, it blends the passive with the active righteousness of Christ, making no distinction between them whatever; and presents this personal obedience of Christ, both active and passive, as being imputed to the sinner in such sense as to be considered his, so as thus to constitute him righteous in Christ.

Some able Arminian divines, such as Wesley, and even Arminius himself, although they disliked the terms used by Calvinists of that class who have advocated this scheme, yet, for the sake of peace, have been willing to allow that the phrase, "imputed righteousness of Christ," might be used in such sense as to be admissible. But when they have proceeded to qualify and explain the sense in which they could use the phrase, it appears that there has still been so important a distinction between their understanding of the subject and that of Calvinists, that the latter could not be willing to adopt the limitations and qualifications of the former.

That we may have a clear view of the real point of difference between them on this subject, we will first present the sentiment of Calvin in his own words, as collected from the third book of his Institutes: "We simply explain justification to be an acceptance by which God receives us into his favor and esteems us as righteous persons; and we say it consists in the remission of sins and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ." "He must certainly be destitute of a righteousness of his own who is taught to seek it out of himself. This is most clearly asserted by the apostle when he says: 'He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' We see that our righteousness is not in ourselves, but in Christ. 'As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' What is placing our righteousness in the obedience of Christ, but asserting that we are accounted righteous only because his obedience is accepted for us as if it were our own?"

From these words of Calvin, it will be seen that he holds to imputation in the strict and proper sense—in such sense that the righteousness of Christ is considered formally our own. The only difference to be seen between this and the scheme already refuted is, that Calvin makes no distinction between the active and passive righteousness of Christ.

2. We will now present a few quotations from leading Arminians on this subject, that we may see wherein they differ from Calvin.

In Mr. Wesley's sermon on "The Lord our Righteousness," he uses these words: "But when is this righteousness imputed? When they believe. In that very hour the righteousness of Christ is theirs. It is imputed to every one that believes, as soon as he believes. But in what sense is this righteousness imputed to believers? In this: all believers are forgiven and accepted, not for the sake of any thing in them, or of any thing that ever was, that is, or ever can be, done by them, but wholly for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered for them. But perhaps some will affirm that faith is imputed to us for righteousness. St. Paul affirms this; therefore I affirm it too. Faith is imputed for righteousness to every believer—namely, faith in the righteousness of Christ; but this is exactly the same thing which has been said before; for by that expression I mean neither more nor less than that we are justified by faith, not by works, or that every believer is forgiven and accepted merely for the sake of what Christ had done and suffered."

In reference to this sermon, Mr. Watson very justly remarks, that it

"is one of peace; one in which he shows how near he was willing to approach those who held the doctrine of Calvin on this subject;" yet we think the point of difference is quite palpable. Calvin teaches imputation in a strict and proper sense; so that the obedience of Christ is accepted for us as if it were our own; whereas Wesley teaches imputation in an accommodated sense. He holds that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us in its effects—that is, in its merits: we are justified by faith in the merits of Christ; or, in other words, we are justified, "forgiven and accepted, for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered for us." It amounts to no more than this: that the meritorious sacrifice of Christ is the ground upon which God pardons the sinner when he believes.

The sense in which Arminians view this subject is very clearly expressed by Goodwin thus: "If we take the phrase of imputing Christ's righteousness improperly, viz., for the bestowing, as it were, of the righteousness of Christ, including his obedience, as well passive as active, in the return of it—that is, in the privileges, blessings, and benefits purchased by it—so a believer may be said to be justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed. But then the meaning can be no more than this. God justifies a believer for the sake of Christ's righteousness, and not for any righteousness of his own. Such an imputation of the righteousness of Christ as this, is no way denied or questioned." (On Justification.)

"Between these opinions as to the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, (as Mr. Watson observes,) it will be seen that there is a manifest difference, which difference arises from the different senses in which the term imputation is taken. The latter takes it in the sense of accounting or allowing to the believer the benefit of the righteousness of Christ, the other in the sense of reckoning or accounting the righteousness of Christ as ours—that is, what he did and suffered is regarded as done and suffered by us."

II. As we think the Calvinistic notion on this subject is now sufficiently clear and distinct from the Arminian view, we will endeavor briefly to examine *its claims in the light of Scripture and reason.*

It will be found, on close examination, that most of the arguments presented in opposition to the first notion of imputation, are, with a little variation, equally applicable to this scheme.

1. This notion of imputation, by the way in which it blends the active and passive righteousness of Christ, *appears either to confound the two in a manner inconsistent with the Scripture account of the subject, or to present us with a righteousness not adapted to our condition.*

We know it has been admitted by the best Arminian writers that the active and the passive righteousness of Christ are not separated in Scripture, and that they ought not to be separated by us. All this we concede; yet there is certainly a difference between blending or uniting them so as still to preserve the real and distinct nature of each, and so blending or uniting them as utterly to confound them, and destroy all distinction in their nature. The former sense Arminians admit; the latter sense the Calvinistic scheme implies. As this scheme teaches that we are justified by the imputation of Christ's active and passive righteousness to us as our own, it must imply either, 1. That we are hereby furnished with an active and a passive justification—that is, that Christ both kept the moral law and suffered for us, in place of our keeping it and suffering the penalty for having broken it; or, 2. It must imply that Christ's active and his passive righteousness are taken as a whole, and constitute, in the same undivided sense, that satisfaction to justice by the imputation of which we are pardoned or justified. If the former be the meaning, it presents us with a righteousness not adapted to our condition; if the latter be the construction, the active and the passive righteousness of Christ are confounded in a manner inconsistent with the Scripture account of the subject.

In reference to the former interpretation, we remark, that to say that Christ kept the moral law in place of our keeping it, and also suffered in our place the penalty for having violated it, implies that we were required perfectly to keep the law, and then to suffer the penalty for its violation also, which is absurd. We could not be required to do both. So far from the law requiring perfect obedience and suffering both, it could only inflict suffering in our default of perfect obedience. Therefore, as we could not need a righteousness embracing both these branches, it follows that if Christ wrought out for us a righteousness of this twofold character, it was not adapted to our condition. Again: admitting that we could need a righteousness of this kind, the moral acts of Christ, as we saw in the examination of the former theory of imputation, in some respects contain too much, and in other respects too little, to suit our exigencies.

In reference to the latter interpretation we remark, that to suppose that the active and passive righteousness of Christ are to be taken together as a whole, constituting, in the same undivided sense, that satisfaction to justice by the imputation of which to us as our own we are pardoned, would so confound the moral and personal acts of Christ with his sufferings, as to make no distinction between them—which is contrary to Scripture. For, although it be true that the active and the

passive righteousness of Christ are both united, and both essential to constitute a satisfaction, in view of which we may be pardoned, yet they are not essential in precisely the same sense. The sufferings of Christ were *directly* essential, as satisfying the claims of justice by enduring what was accepted instead of the specific penalty denounced; the active obedience of Christ was *indirectly* essential, as giving perfection and dignity to the character suffering, that thereby his sufferings might have power to satisfy. Hence, properly speaking, the moral obedience of Christ was only essential in making satisfaction to justice, as it was necessary that the character suffering should be possessed of every perfection, in order to render his sufferings available.

The divinity of Christ was just as essential, and essential in the same sense, in rendering an adequate satisfaction to law and justice, as his active obedience; but will any one say that the divine nature of our blessed Lord was imputed to us as our own, or that God accounted us as actually possessing the infinite attributes of the Godhead? And yet it is quite clear that the divinity and moral obedience of Christ sustain the same relation to his atonement. They give dignity and value to that "obedience unto death" which satisfied for sin; but they constituted no part of the penal infliction of justice. In the Scriptures, Christ is said to have suffered "for us"—that is, in our stead; but he is nowhere said to have possessed proper divinity, or to have obeyed the moral law "for us," or in our stead. The truth is, he possessed divinity, and obeyed the moral law for himself: this was essential to his character as Mediator; but he suffered "for us;" and to say that the moral obedience of Christ is to be imputed to us as our own, and that it, in the same sense with his sufferings, constitutes that satisfaction to justice in view of which we are pardoned, is a confounding of the active and the passive obedience of Christ, implied in the Calvinistic scheme, which the Scriptures do not sanction.

2. This scheme of imputation implies the same absurd fiction embraced in the former one—that is, *that the all-wise and infinite Being should consider the acts and sufferings of another as formally and de facto our own.*

All that was said on this subject in reference to the Antinomian scheme, applies with equal force against the theory of Calvin; hence we add no more here upon that point.

3. Lastly, we remark, that this, as well as the former scheme, *is perfectly gratuitous; there being no Scripture which, by any fair interpretation, affords it the least countenance.*

Although we have admitted that the phrase "imputed righteousness

of Christ" might, with proper explanations, be used in a good sense, yet it may be worth while here plainly to assert that there is in Scripture no authority either for the expression or for the Calvinistic interpretation on the subject; and therefore it were better that both be discarded. In those Scriptures mainly relied upon as teaching the Calvinistic notion of imputation, such terms are used as "impute" or "imputed," "the righteousness of God," "clothed with garments of salvation," "robes of righteousness," "white linen, the righteousness of the saints," "putting on Christ," etc. But in every case a fair exegesis of the text, in consistency with the context, will clearly show that nothing like the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us as our own for justification is taught. And—

(1) We remark, in reference to impute and imputation, that these terms are never used as implying the imputation of something possessed by, or done by, one person to another as his own. But, on the contrary, these words are always spoken in reference to something possessed or performed by the person to whom the imputation is made. Thus it is said, "Abraham believed God, and it (the faith of Abraham) was *imputed* to him for righteousness." Again: "But to him that worketh not, but believeth, his faith is *imputed* to him for righteousness"—that is, his own faith, and not the faith of another man.

(2) "When a thing is said simply to be imputed, as sin, folly, and so righteousness, the phrase is not to be taken concerning the bare acts of the things, as if (for example) to impute sin to a man signified this, to repute the man (to whom sin is imputed) to have committed a sinful act, or as if to impute folly were simply to charge a man to have done foolishly; but when it is applied to things that are evil, and attributed to persons that have power over those to whom the imputation is made, it signifieth the charging the guilt of what is imputed upon the head of the person to whom the imputation is made, with an intent of inflicting some condign punishment upon him. So that to impute sin (in Scripture phrase), is to charge the guilt of sin upon a man with a purpose to punish him for it." (Goodwin on Justification.)

Thus when Shimei (2 Sam. xix. 19) prayeth David not to impute wickedness unto him, he means merely to ask exemption from the punishment which his wickedness deserved; and when the apostle says, "Sin is not imputed where there is no law," he does not mean that sin is not sin wherever it may exist, for that would be a contradiction in terms; but merely that sin is not so imputed as that punishment is inflicted on the sinner.

(3) In those passages which refer to "the righteousness of God," etc., as connected with justification, the allusion is not to the active and passive righteousness of Christ, but to God's method of justifying sinners under the gospel. This is evident from these words:—Rom. x. 3, 4: "For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness *to every one that believeth.*" And Rom. iii. 21, 22: "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference." Here it is undeniable that "the righteousness of God" spoken of is God's method of justifying sinners under the gospel by faith in Christ.

(4) In those scriptures referring to "robes of righteousness," "putting on Christ," etc., it is very evident from the context that they relate either to temporal blessings, habitual holiness, or to the future rewards of the saints; and in no case is there the least evidence that they refer to the obedience of Christ imputed to the saints as their own.

There are other passages that might be named as having been quoted by Calvinists to sustain their favorite dogma of imputation; but we have presented what appear to be the most pointed, except it be one more, which, as being a peculiarly favorite text with them on this point, we have reserved to the last. It is Rom. v. 19: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Here it has been argued that the obedience of Christ is imputed to believers in the same sense as the disobedience of Adam is imputed to his posterity; and assuming that Adam's sin is so imputed to his posterity as to be considered formally their own, Calvinists have rallied around this passage as a triumphant proof of their notion of imputation. To this we shall reply in the language of the learned Goodwin:

"To come home to the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, I answer, first, that either to say that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to his posterity, (of believers,) or the sin of Adam to his, are both expressions at least unknown to the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures. There is neither word, nor syllable, nor letter, nor tittle, of any such thing to be found there. But that the faith of him that believeth is imputed for *righteousness,* are words which the Holy Ghost useth. But, secondly, because I would make no exception against words, farther than necessity enforceth, I grant there are expressions in Scripture con

cerning both the communication of Adam's sin with his posterity, and the righteousness of Christ with those that believe, that will fairly enough bear the term imputation, if it be rightly understood, and according to the use of it in Scripture upon other occasions. But as it is commonly taken and understood by many, it occasions much error and mistake. Concerning Adam's sin, or disobedience, many are said to be 'made sinners by it,' and so, 'by the obedience of Christ,' it is said (in the same place) 'that many shall be made righteous:' but if men will exchange language with the Holy Ghost, they must see that they make him no loser. If, when they say 'Adam's sin is imputed to all unto condemnation,' their meaning be the same with the Holy Ghost, when he saith, 'that by the disobedience of one many were made sinners,' there is no harm done; but it is evident, by what many speak, that the Holy Ghost and they are not of one mind touching the imputation or communication of Adam's sin with his posterity, but that they differ as much in meaning as in words. If, when they say 'Adam's sin is imputed to all unto condemnation,' their meaning be this: that the guilt of Adam's sin is charged upon his whole posterity, or that the punishment of Adam's sin redounded from his person to his whole posterity, a main part of which punishment lieth in that original defilement wherein they are all conceived and born, and whereby they are truly made sinners before God — if this be the meaning of the term imputation when applied to Adam's sin, let it pass. But if the meaning be that that sinful act wherein Adam transgressed when he ate the forbidden fruit is in the letter and formality of it imputed to his posterity, so that by this imputation all his posterity are made formally sinners, this is an imputation which the Scriptures will never justify." (Treatise on Justification.)

So in the same manner, the righteousness or obedience of Christ is imputed to us, not by considering it ours in the letter and formality thereof, but by admitting us to share in its merits, blessings, and privileges. From what has been said, we think it will appear evident that the Calvinistic scheme of justification by the imputation of Christ's active and passive obedience to us as our own, must be abandoned as inconsistent with the Scriptures. And as we have seen that neither the doctrine nor the phraseology employed is sanctioned by the Bible; and as the latter is so liable to abuse, sliding so easily into all the absurdities of Antinomianism, it deserves to be at once and forever abandoned.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXX.

Question 1. Who have been the advocates of the scheme of justification by the imputation of Christ's active and passive obedience?

2. In what does this differ from the Antinomian plan?

3. Have Arminians admitted the use of the phrase "imputed righteousness" at all?

4. What is the real point of difference between Calvinists and Arminians on this subject?

5. How does it appear that this scheme either confounds in an unscriptural manner the active and passive righteousness of Christ, or provides us a righteousness unadapted to our condition?

6. Does this scheme imply the same as our former one?

7. How does it appear that it is yet lowly grievous?

CHAPTER XXXI.

JUSTIFICATION—FALSE THEORIES REFUTED—JUSTIFICATION BY WORKS ALONE, AND BY FAITH AND WORKS UNITED, CONSIDERED.

THE *third method of justification which we propose to examine, is that which teaches that we are justified by works alone.*

Justification by *works alone* may be understood in several different senses.

1. It may mean justification by perfect obedience to the original law of God. This, as we have already shown, is absolutely impossible to a fallen sinner. The condition of the first covenant being "Do this, (in your own person,) and live," and "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them, it will hence follow that, as the apostle declares that "all have sinned," and "all the world are guilty before God," to be justified by works of perfect obedience to the first covenant, or original law of God, is absolutely impossible.

2. Justification by *works alone* may mean a perfect conformity to that moral code or law given to the Jews in their own Scriptures, and to the Gentiles by the influence of the Holy Spirit given unto them, to "show the work of the law written in their hearts."

This is substantially the same law that was given to Adam, and, in reference to its subject-matter, is identical with the covenant of works, which is still in force, not as a principle of justification, but as a rule of life, by which to estimate the moral standing of man, and exhibit the magnitude of his delinquencies in the sight of God; for, as the apostle says, "By the law is the knowledge of sin." In reference to this law, it was that the Jews, in St. Paul's day, set up a claim to justification by works.

The great argument in the Epistle to the Romans is to show the utter impracticability of this scheme of justification. We need only in this place quote the words in which the apostle sums up his grand conclusion, or sets forth his main position, thus: "Therefore by *the deeds of the law* there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin." This one passage, to such as are willing to

abide by the teachings of inspiration, must forever explode the old Jewish scheme of justification by the works of the moral law; and as we know not that any respectable authority in the Christian Church since the apostle's days has pleaded for justification in professedly the same way, we may pass this scheme without farther notice.

3. Justification by *works alone* may be understood as implying justification by *works of evangelical obedience under the gospel*, or those works which proceed from faith, and are performed by the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

This scheme has had some advocates in different ages of the Church, and in modern times has found an able patron in Bishop Bull, the impress of whose views upon this subject is still perceptible upon many of the clergy of the Church of England.

The grand argument in support of this scheme has been founded upon the language of St. James, who, it is contended, expressly teaches justification by works; and the effort has been made to reconcile St. Paul to St. James, by alleging that the former, when he denies the possibility of "justification by works," refers only to works of obedience to the Mosaic law; and that, when he teaches justification "by faith," he means the works which spring from faith. We reserve the refutation of this and every other scheme of justification by works, till we come to examine the doctrine of justification *by faith only;* since the establishment of the latter will disprove the former. They cannot stand together.

The fourth scheme of justification to be considered, is that which teaches that we are justified by faith and works taken together.

This scheme has had a respectable number of advocates, but they have differed considerably among themselves in reference to the kind of works which are united with faith in justification, and the degree of importance which should be attached to particular works.

Dr. Macknight, perhaps one of the ablest defenders the scheme has ever had, presents a statement of the doctrine in the following words: "And surely it belongeth to God to appoint what conditions or means of justification seemeth to him good. Now that he hath actually made faith and works, not separately, but jointly, the condition of justification, both Paul and James have declared." But Dr. Macknight understood justification to mean, not the pardon of sin in this world, but the sentence of acquittal to be pronounced upon the righteous at the day of final judgment. Hence, according to him, justification is a blessing which no man can attain in this life.

Others, however, who have held to justification by faith and works

have admitted that it takes place in this life; and not a few have attached peculiar importance to some particular works, especially to the ceremony of Christian baptism. This by some has been considered the great *sine qua non* in order to justification. It is true, they have not considered baptism available for justification in an adult, except it be preceded or accompanied by faith; but when connected with faith, they have considered that ordinance not only as the prescribed means, but also as the only legitimate evidence of justification. Indeed, so much importance has been attached to that ordinance in this connection, that it has been strenuously contended that without baptism there can be no remission of sin. It is difficult to determine, from the manner in which a certain class have expressed themselves, whether it would not be more correct to say that they hold to justification by works; for they certainly attach far more importance to baptism than they do to faith, inasmuch as they say that a proper faith may exist without justification, but a proper baptism cannot.

Closely allied to this notion is the doctrine of the Roman Catholics on the subject of satisfaction, penance, etc. They not only hold that works are essential to the complete remission of sin, but they teach that they are meritorious. They confound justification with sanctification, and contend that we must be inherently righteous before we can be just in the sight of God; and this inherent righteousness, according to them, is derived from the merit of good works. Hence their peculiar views on the subject of penance, indulgences, purgatory, etc.

But the full refutation of all these variant schemes of justification by faith and works united, we trust will be sufficiently apparent in the discussion of the scheme of justification by faith only. We will, however, remark at this time, that the *prima facie* evidence of Scripture is against them, as we read nothing there in reference to justification by faith and works taken together: to be justified "by faith," and to be justified "by works," are both terms used in Scripture; but justification *by faith and works* is a phrase not found in Holy Writ. We presume the advocates of this doctrine will not pretend that it is taught by St. Paul, and unless they can find something to sustain it in the Epistle of St. James, we know of no text in the Bible upon which they can base a plausible defense of their theory. But as that passage will be particularly examined in the discussion of justification by faith only, we will close the present chapter by presenting one leading objection to all these schemes of justification *by works*, and *by faith and works*—it is this:

All these schemes are either based upon an entire misapprehension of the

nature of justification as presented in Scripture, or else they labor under most of the difficulties connected with the schemes of imputation already exhibited.

We have already shown that, in the Bible acceptation, to *justify* is to *pardon* or *forgive sin;* or, in other words, it is a sentence by which the punishment due to sin is remitted. This is a great and prominent truth, most clearly presented in the New Testament; and most of the difficulties and inconsistencies on the subject of justification may be traced to a disregard of this leading principle; therefore we should, while on this subject, endeavor to keep it still in view.

The proofs on this point already presented we think are very conclusive, but as there is scarce an erroneous scheme of justification but what must necessarily battle with this truth for its own existence, we beg leave at this time to ask a careful attention to the concluding part of the fourth chapter of 2 Corinthians. Here we learn that "reconciliation to God," the "non-imputation of trespasses," and being "made the righteousness of God," are phrases that are all used as expressive of the same thing, and as synonymous with justification. The passage admits no other sensible interpretation. If, then, we admit that to justify means to pardon or forgive sin, the schemes now in question are involved at once in inextricable difficulties.

1. As justification means *pardon,* then, as the Scriptures declare, "God justifieth the *ungodly,*" for none others can need pardon. Hence we must be pardoned before we become righteous by personal obedience or inherent holiness; therefore we cannot be justified by those works of obedience which none but the righteous can perform. This would be to require us to do, in order to justification, what can only be done by such as are already justified, which is absurd.

2. If we are justified by works at all, these works must either embrace perfect obedience to the law of God, or they must not: if they do, then the law can demand no more, and we have no need for the death of Christ: if they do not, then we cannot be justified by them; for the law saith, "Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

3. If we are justified by faith and works taken together, then these works must either be performed before or after justification. If they are performed before justification, then they must be performed while we are in unbelief; "for all that believe are justified;" and if in unbelief, they must be sinful; for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" and if so, it would follow that we are justified by sin, which is absurd. But if the works are performed after justification, then it will follow that

the effect precedes the cause, which is also absurd. Indeed, if we are justified by works of evangelical obedience in connection with faith, it would seem inconsistent to say that we can be justified in this life; but if, with Dr. Macknight, we deny this, we deny the Scriptures. But we reserve the full refutation of these schemes for the next chapter.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXXI

QUESTION 1. In what three different senses may justification *by works alone* be understood?

2. How is the first seen to be impossible?
3. Who have advocated the second?
4. Who have advocated the third?
5. How does Bishop Bull endeavor to reconcile St. Paul and St. James?
6. Have the advocates for justification *by faith and works* been agreed among themselves?
7. What was the peculiar notion of Dr. Macknight?
8. In what respect has peculiar importance been attached to a particular work?
9. What is the peculiarity of the Roman Catholic view?
10. What is the *prima facie* evidence of Scripture in reference to these plans?
11. What leading objection is presented to them?
12. How is this objection sustained?
13. What proof is adduced in reference to the Scripture meaning of justification?
14. What three difficulties are presented as being connected with all these systems?

CHAPTER XXXII.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ONLY, ILLUSTRATED AND PROVED.

In the preceding chapters we have considered and endeavored to refute all the different methods proposed for the attainment of justification, except the last, viz., *justification by faith only*, which we named as the method presented in the Scriptures. The present chapter, therefore, will be devoted to the consideration of justification by faith only. We think the evidence already presented contains a satisfactory refutation of all the different schemes of justification which we have considered; but if we can succeed in establishing the position which we now propose—that is, that justification by faith only is the only scheme which the Scriptures authorize—all other schemes will necessarily be thereby disproved, and should be discarded as being doubly refuted.

If we can select any doctrine contained in the Scriptures as occupying in the scheme of salvation a more prominent and important position than any other, it is the one now proposed to be established. The great principles upon which it is founded, and with which it is connected, extend throughout the entire gospel system, insomuch that a misapprehension of this leading doctrine will necessarily interrupt the harmony of the parts, and destroy the symmetry of the entire scheme of redemption. As if with a special eye to the importance of the subject, and as if God would exhibit a peculiar concern to render a serious error on so vital a point almost impossible, we find this doctrine not only plainly stated in the Scriptures, but it is repeated again and again in various places; it is particularly dwelt upon, presented in a diversity of aspects, and sustained by a variety of arguments.

But notwithstanding the explicitness and fullness of the Scriptures upon this point, as we have already seen, it is a subject on which there has, from the apostles' day to the present time, been much controversy. St. Paul complains of the Jews of his day, that "they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness," were unwilling to "submit themselves to the righteousness of God," or to God's plan of justification. Even so it has been the case, up to the present time, that the plan of salvation revealed in Scripture,

which proposes unmerited pardon to the ungodly but penitent sinner, upon the simple condition of evangelical faith in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, has not only had to contend against the settled enmity of the human heart, but many of the most learned and pious have, to some extent, misunderstood the true scriptural doctrine of justification by faith. Upon this, as well as upon every other doctrine of Christianity, the teachings of inspiration must be our guide; and we now appeal to their infallible testimony, with the strongest confidence of finding a satisfactory account of the doctrine before us.

I. That we may perceive clearly the force of the Scripture proof that we are *justified by faith only*, we will first *define the sense* in which we understand that doctrine.

On this subject, we first quote the clear and forcible language of Mr. Wesley. In his sermon on "Justification by Faith," he speaks thus: "Surely the difficulty of assenting to the proposition that faith is the only condition of justification, must arise from not understanding it. We mean thereby thus much, that it is the only thing without which no one is justified—the only thing that is immediately, indispensably, absolutely, requisite in order to pardon. As on the one hand, though a man should have every thing else without faith, yet he cannot be justified; so on the other, though he be supposed to want every thing else, yet if he hath faith, he cannot but be justified. For suppose a sinner of any kind or degree, in a full sense of his total ungodliness, of his utter inability to think, speak, or do good, and his absolute meetness for hell fire—suppose, I say, this sinner, helpless and hopeless, casts himself wholly on the mercy of God in Christ, (which, indeed, he cannot do but by the grace of God,) who can doubt but he is forgiven in that moment? Who will affirm that any more is indispensably required, before that sinner can be justified?"

By faith as a *condition* of justification, we are not to understand that it is absolutely, and in every sense, the cause of justification. Far from it. The love, or grace, of God is the original *moving* cause. The *efficient* cause is the Holy Spirit, "who takes of the things of Jesus, and shows them unto us." The *meritorious* cause is the death of Christ. The *instrumental* cause, on God's part, is the word of God; but the *conditional* cause, on our part, is faith.

As we have seen, justification by works, which implies perfect conformity to the first covenant, is to us impossible: Christ hath satisfied for our breach of the first covenant, by suffering "for us," and we are now placed under the new covenant of grace. To become personally righteous under this covenant, we must comply with its conditions.

God, who graciously placed us under this covenant, has a right to prescribe the condition upon which we shall be accepted under it. This, we have shown, is faith. By the satisfaction or atonement of Christ we are not to understand that men are absolutely and unconditionally freed from the demands of the covenant of works. They are only unconditionally freed so far as to be placed under the new covenant. Those of whom conditions are required, can only be delivered from the curse of the law by complying with the condition of faith; hence Christ is said to be "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." When we believe, faith is imputed to us for evangelical righteousness. Had Jesus Christ done all that he did for sinners without prescribing faith as the condition of justification, faith then could not have been imputed to us for righteousness. It derives its efficacy from the appointment of God; and had the wisdom of God prescribed love to God, or any thing else, as the condition of pardon, instead of faith, it is very clear that love to God, or whatever else had been prescribed, would then have sustained the same relation to our justification that faith now sustains.

But the question may be asked, Are not other duties enjoined in Scripture as well as faith? and if so, how can it be said that we are justified by faith *only?* To this we may reply, that other duties, it is true, are enjoined, but the Scriptures nowhere make them, like faith, the absolute and invariable condition of justification.

Indeed, as we have seen from the Scriptures that faith is the condition, in such sense that none can be justified without it, and all who have it are that moment justified, it necessarily follows that nothing else can be a condition, in the same sense, without a contradiction. Suppose, for illustration, that Christ had made the taking of the sacrament of the Lord's-supper the condition of justification in the same sense in which we have proved faith to be the condition; then it would follow that none can be justified without partaking of that sacrament, and that all who do partake thereof are that moment justified. Now, is it not manifest that an individual might partake of the supper without faith? and if so, he must that moment either be justified, or not. If we say he *is* justified, then it follows that faith cannot be the condition of justification in the sense specified; but if we say he *is not* that moment justified, then it follows that partaking of the supper cannot be the condition of justification in the sense specified. The two conditions cannot be reconciled; they imply a manifest contradiction.

If the Scriptures exhibit faith to be the condition of justification, in the sense above, then it follows that, unless the Scriptures flatly contra

dict themselves, they cannot teach that any thing else, separate and distinct from faith, is a condition in the same sense. And thus it is evident that, in showing that we are justified by faith, in the sense above, it is clearly implied that justification is by faith *only*—that is, faith is the thing made the *condition* of justification, in this important sense.

Other things, such as *repentance*, *prayer*, etc., may be, in a correct sense, said to be required; but it is only as they are connected with faith, and because they are thus connected, as being presupposed as necessary antecedents, as contained in it, as implied as its immediate fruits, or as necessary subservient means or consequents. In a principal action, all its parts, necessary antecedents, subservient actions, and immediate and necessary consequents, are properly implied. Thus: "If the besieged be bound by articles to surrender the town to the besiegers at such a time, it need not be expressed in the articles that they shall withdraw their guards and cease resistance—open the gates, and yield up this house, or that street: all this is implied clearly in the articles of capitulation." Even so faith, the great condition of justification, may imply all the rest in a certain sense.

Hearing the word and repentance may be necessary antecedents; knowledge of Christ, assent to the truth of the gospel, relying on the merits of Christ, and coming to and receiving Christ as an almighty, all-sufficient, present Saviour, are necessary concomitants or properties of faith; denying ourselves and taking up our cross daily, hearing, praying, meditating, and attendance upon the ordinances of the gospel, may be connected with faith, either as antecedents or consequents. Yet none of these external means, nor all of them taken together, are made the *condition* of justification, in the same important sense in which, as we have seen, faith is presented. Except so far as some of them are synonymous with, or implied in, faith, they may all exist without justification, or justification may take place in the absence of any or all of them.

II. *Justification by faith only, expressly proved by Scripture.*

1. The first class of texts on which we rely embraces *those passages in which faith is directly and expressly presented as the condition or means of justification.*

In Acts xiii. 39, we read: "And by him *all that believe are justified* from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Here justification is promised to "all that believe," which clearly implies (if none can be justified without faith, as all will admit) that faith is presented as the condition.

In the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul treats expressly of the subject of justification. From that masterly discourse we next make some quotations. Rom. iii. 26, 28, 30: "To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness; that he might be just, and the *justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*" "Therefore we conclude that a man is *justified by faith* without the deeds of the law." "Seeing it is one God which *shall justify* the circumcision *by faith*, and uncircumcision *through faith.*" Rom. v. 1, 2: "Therefore *being justified by faith*, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access *by faith into this grace* wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Gal. iii. 8, 9: "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would *justify* the heathen *through faith*, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be *of faith* are blessed with faithful Abraham." Gal. iii. 22–24: "But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise *by faith* of Jesus Christ might be given to *them that believe.* But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be *justified by faith.*"

In all these passages, St. Paul most clearly and explicitly declares that justification is by faith. Now let it be remembered that in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, from which the quotations are made, the apostle is expressly discussing the subject of justification, and is not the conclusion irresistible, that faith is presented as the condition of justification? If the apostle did not design to convey this idea, surely his language is well calculated to mislead. Had he meant that justification was either *by works*, or *by faith and works united*, why did he not so express it? The argument from this class of texts, in which quotations might be greatly multiplied, we think must be satisfactory with such as are disposed to abide by the plain declarations of inspiration.

2. Our second argument is based upon *those passages which represent what is manifestly synonymous with justification, as being through faith.*

This, it will readily be perceived, is substantially the same argument as the former, the only difference being that, in this argument, the *term* justification is not used; but if the terms used are of the same import, the evidence is quite as conclusive.

The terms referred to, as used synonymously with justification, in the scriptures to be adduced, are the following:—"Righteousness," "The righteousness of God," "The remission of sins," "The counting, or

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reckoning, for righteousness," "The imputation of righteousness," "The non-imputation of sin," "Deliverance from condemnation," etc. That these terms, in the passages we shall adduce, are synonymous with justification, can scarcely be doubted. The evidence of this fact is palpable upon the face of the texts to be quoted. We will, however, say a few things respecting the second phrase presented, which has perhaps given rise to more controversy than any of the others. It is, "The righteousness of God."

In reference to this phrase, which occurs in Rom. i. 17, Whitby remarks: "This phrase, in St. Paul's style, doth always signify the righteousness of faith in Christ Jesus's dying or shedding his blood for us." Doddridge paraphrases it thus: "That is, the method which God hath contrived and proposed for our becoming righteous, by believing his testimony, and casting ourselves on his mercy." Wesley, Benson, Clarke, Macknight, Watson, Stuart, and indeed the great body of learned commentators, perfectly accord with the exposition as quoted from Whitby and Doddridge. To this we might add the testimony of Paul himself, who, in Rom. iii. 22, gives precisely the same comment upon the phrase in question. "Even," says he, "the righteousness of God, which is *by faith of Jesus Christ.*"

As we think a particular examination of each of the phrases presented, so as to show that it is synonymous with justification, will be rendered unnecessary by the clearness of the evidence which the passages to be quoted will exhibit, we proceed to present the Scripture testimony under this head.

Rom. i. 17: "For therein is *the righteousness of God* revealed *from faith to faith;* as it is written, The just shall live *by faith.*" Rom. iii. 21, 22, 25: "But now *the righteousness of God* without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets: even *the righteousness of God,* which is *by faith of Jesus Christ,* unto all and upon all them that *believe.*" "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation *through faith in his blood,* to declare *his righteousness* for *the remission of sins that are past,* through the forbearance of God." Rom. iv. 3, 4, 5, 9: "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham *believed God,* and it was *counted unto him for righteousness.* Now to him that *worketh* is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that *worketh not,* but *believeth* on him that *justifieth the ungodly,* his *faith is counted for righteousness.*" "For we say that *faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.*" Rom. iv. 11, 13: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the *righteousness of the faith* which he had, yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them *that*

believe, though they be not circumcised; that *righteousness might be imputed unto them also*." "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through *the righteousness of faith*." Rom. iv. 22–24: "And therefore *it* (faith) *was imputed to him for righteousness*. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that *it was imputed to him;* but for us also, to whom *it shall be imputed*, if we *believe on him* that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." Rom. ix. 31, 32: "But Israel, which followed after the *law of righteousness*, hath not attained to the *law of righteousness*. Wherefore? Because they sought it not *by faith*, but as it were by the *works of the law;* for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone." Rom. x. 4–10: "For Christ is the end of the law *for righteousness to every one that believeth*. For Moses describeth *the righteousness* which is *of the law*, that the man which *doeth those things* shall live by them. But the *righteousness which is of faith* speaketh on this wise, Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above;) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of *faith*, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and *shalt believe in thy heart* that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man *believeth unto righteousness;* and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Gen. xv. 6: "And he (Abraham) *believed in the Lord;* and he *counted it to him for righteousness*." Gal. iii. 6: "Even as Abraham *believed God*, and *it was accounted to him for righteousness*." Gal. v. 5, 6: "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of *righteousness by faith*. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but *faith* which worketh by love." Phil. iii. 9: "And be found in him, not having *mine own righteousness which is of the law*, but that which is *through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*." Heb. xi. 7: Noah, it is said, "became heir of *the righteousness which is by faith*." Acts x. 43: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name *whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*." John iii. 18: "He that *believeth* on him *is not condemned;* but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

We think it impossible for any unprejudiced mind carefully to examine the scriptures here quoted, without being satisfied that the terms, "Righteousness," "Righteousness of God," "Remission of sins," "Counting, or reckoning, for righteousness," "The imputation of

righteousness," "The non-imputation of sin," and "Deliverance from condemnation," all imply the same thing as justification; but as all these are said to be by, or through, faith, it necessarily follows that justification is by faith.

3. Our third argument is based upon *such passages as present what are necessary and inseparable concomitants of justification as being by, or through, faith.*

There are presented in the Scriptures several blessings, which, though distinct in their nature from justification, invariably accompany it, and never can exist but in connection with it. Now, it must be admitted that, if two or more things never exist except in connection with each other, whatever is indispensable to the existence of one must be indispensable to the existence of the others. Whatever would lead to the existence of one would necessarily lead to the existence of the others; or, in other words, whatever is the grand indispensable condition to the existence of the one, must sustain the same relation to the others.

For illustration of this argument, we refer to the familiar relations of husband and wife. These relations necessarily imply the existence of each other. They are inseparable concomitants. Although the two relations are not identical—the husband is not the wife, nor the wife the husband—yet the relation of husband cannot exist without that of wife, nor the relation of wife without that of husband. Now, is it not clear from this, that whatever would necessarily lead to the existence of the one relation, would also lead to the existence of the other; and whatever would prevent the existence of the one relation, would necessarily prevent the existence of the other?

Apply this principle of reasoning to the subject in hand: regeneration, adoption, and salvation, in a certain sense, are inseparable concomitants of justification — the one cannot exist without the others. Whoever is justified, is born of God, or regenerated, adopted, and, in a certain sense, saved; and none can be regenerated, adopted, or saved, in that sense, but the justified. From this it will follow that whatever leads to the one of these concomitant blessings, must lead to the others; and whatever would prevent the one, must prevent the others; or, in other words, whatever is the grand condition to the existence of the one, sustains the same relation to the others.

Now, if we can show from the Scriptures that we are *regenerated, adopted, and saved, through, or by, faith,* it will necessarily follow that we are *justified* through, or by, *faith.* This, we think, will be evident from the following Scriptures:—

Rom. i. 16. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it

is the power of God unto *salvation* to every one that *believeth;* to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Eph. ii. 8: "For by grace are ye *saved through faith;* and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Luke vii. 50: "And he said to the woman, *Thy faith hath saved thee;* go in peace." John xx. 31: "But these are written that ye *might believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that *believing* ye *might have life* through his name." Mark xvi. 16: "He that *believeth* and is baptized *shall be saved;* but he that *believeth not shall be damned.*" Acts xvi. 31: "*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou *shalt be saved.*" 2 Tim. iii. 15: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise *unto salvation, through faith* which is in Christ Jesus." John i. 12, 13: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power *to become the sons of God,* even to them that *believe on his name.* Which *were born,* not *of blood,* nor *of the will of the flesh,* nor *of the will of man,* but *of God.*" Acts xv. 9: "And put no difference between us and them, *purifying their hearts by faith.*" Acts xxvi. 18: "That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which *are sanctified by faith* that is in me." Gal. iii. 26: "For ye are all *the children of God by faith* in Christ Jesus." 1 John v. 1: "Whosoever *believeth* that Jesus is the Christ is *born of God.*" 1 John v. 10: "He that *believeth* on the Son of God *hath the witness in himself.*"

From the preceding scriptures, it is undeniable that faith is the necessary condition of regeneration, adoption, and salvation; but as these are inseparable concomitants of justification, it follows that faith is the necessary condition of justification.

4. Our fourth argument is based upon *such passages as show that justification is by grace, and not by works.*

In Romans xi. 6, we have these words: "And if by *grace,* then it is no more of *works:* otherwise *grace* is no more grace. But if it be of *works,* then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more *work.*" From this scripture it is evident that grace and works are opposed to each other. Whatever is of grace cannot be of works, and whatever is of works cannot be of grace. In Rom. iv. 16, we read: "Therefore it is of *faith,* that it might be by *grace.*" From this text, it is evident that faith and grace are so connected that justification cannot be by grace unless it is of faith. Hence, if we can prove that justification is not of works, but of grace, it will follow that it must be by faith.

This we think will appear from the following scriptures:—Rom. iii 20, 27, 28: "Therefore by *the deeds of the law* there shall no flesh be *justified* in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." "Where

is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? *of works?* Nay; but by the law *of faith.* Therefore we conclude that a man is *justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*" Rom. iv. 4, 5: "Now to him that *worketh* is the reward not reckoned *of grace,* but *of debt.* But to him that *worketh not,* but *believeth* on him that *justifieth the ungodly,* his *faith* is counted for *righteousness.*" Rom. iii. 24: "Being *justified freely by his grace,* through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Gal. iii. 2, 11: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the *works of the law,* or by the *hearing of faith?*" "But that no man is *justified* by *the law* in the sight of God, it is evident; for, The *just* shall live *by faith.*" Gal. ii. 16: "Knowing that a man *is not justified by the works of the law,* but by the *faith* of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be *justified by the faith of Christ,* and not by the works of the law; for *by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*" Gal. v. 4: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are *justified by the law;* ye are *fallen from grace.*"

From the foregoing scriptures, it is evident that justification is not of *works,* but of *grace;* therefore it must be *by faith.* We think the evidence we have produced proves conclusively that *justification by faith* is the plain doctrine of the Bible.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXXII.

QUESTION 1. How is justification by *faith only* defined?
2. What is the character of the first class of texts adduced?
3. Repeat some of them.
4. What is the second class?
5. In what does this differ from the former argument?
6. What are some of the principal texts of this class?
7. What is the third class of texts?
8. How is this argument explained?
9. What are some of the texts in reference to *salvation* by faith?
10. In reference to *regeneration?*
11. In reference to *adoption?*
12. Upon what class of texts is the fourth argument based?
13. What are some of the principal texts?
14. What is the *efficient* cause of justification?
15. The *meritorious* cause?
16. The *moving* cause?
17. The *instrumental* cause on *God's part?*
18. The *conditional* cause, on *our part?*
19. From what does the justifying efficacy of faith result?
20. In what sense are prayer and other duties necessary to justification?
21. Can there be two absolute and distinct conditions of justification?
22. How can this be proved?

CHAPTER XXXIII.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ONLY—OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

We proceed now to consider some of *the leading objections to the doctrine of justification by faith only.* They may all, so far as we consider them deserving any notice, be embraced in two: first, it is objected to this doctrine that the Scriptures teach justification by *evangelical obedience;* secondly, it is said that the Scriptures teach justification by *baptism.* These two leading objections we will now briefly consider.

I. First, it is objected that the doctrine of justification *by faith only, is inconsistent with what the Scriptures teach in reference to justification by evangelical obedience.*

That we may perceive the true force of this objection, we here observe, that the word justify is sometimes used in Scripture in relation to that sentence of acquittal or condemnation which shall be awarded to every man at the day of judgment. In this sense it is used by our Saviour in Matt. xii. 37: "For by *thy words thou shalt be justified,* and by *thy words thou shalt be condemned.*" This justification is, in a certain sense, *by works;* for "words" in the text denote the *entire actions;* but this is not by the *merit* of works, but only implies that we are justified by the *evidence* of our works, or that we are to be rewarded, as the Scriptures repeatedly declare, "according to our works." So that we remark, in reference to this justification, 1. It is not by works on the ground of merit, but only by the evidence or measure of works. 2. These works themselves are not contemplated in the abstract, but only as connected with, and growing out of, evangelical faith. 3. This justification is entirely a distinct and separate thing from the justification in question. The justification generally spoken of in the Scriptures, of which St. Paul treats so largely in the letters to the Romans and to the Galatians, and which we have presented as being by faith only, means pardon for the guilt of past sin bestowed upon the believer the moment he believes. Hence it is apparent that any thing affirmed in reference to justification at the day of judgment, can have no bearing on the subject in hand.

The scripture mainly relied upon in defense of justification by works of evangelical obedience, in opposition to justification by faith only, is the Epistle of St. James. To this we will for a few moments direct our attention.

Some have rashly concluded that St. James, on the subject of justification, contradicts St. Paul. Under this view, Luther rejected the Epistle of James from the canon of Scripture, calling it "an epistle of straw." The great body of the Church have not, however, doubted its authority; and many different plans have been presented to reconcile the seeming contradictions of the two apostles. To enter extensively into the controversy which has been connected with this subject, would be tedious, and we think unnecessary. All that seems to be required is, to show that St. James does not contradict what we have seen to be so clearly taught by St. Paul, and so fully set forth in the Scriptures. This, we think, will not be difficult to evince. The contradiction supposed between the two apostles respects what they have written in reference to the justification of Abraham. That there can be no discrepancy between them, we think will be evident from the following considerations:

1. They do not refer to the *same event.* St. Paul speaks of the justification of Abraham when the promise of the seed was made to him before the birth of Isaac: St. James speaks of the justification of Abraham when "he offered Isaac his son upon the altar." The two justifications were so far from being the same, that they stand in history about twenty-five years asunder. Hence, whatever St. James may say, he cannot contradict St. Paul, as they speak of entirely different transactions.

2. The two apostles do not speak of the *same faith*—they do not use the term in the same sense. St. Paul speaks of that faith which confides or trusts in the merits of Christ for salvation; which "works by love and purifies the heart;" which implies "believing with the heart unto righteousness"—in a word, he speaks of a living, active, powerful, evangelical faith. St. James speaks of a "dead" faith, a faith which is "alone," a mere assent of the understanding; such a faith as the "devils" possessed. So far from St. Paul affirming that we are justified by such a faith as this, he said not one word in reference to such faith. The faith of which he spoke is never "alone," though it alone justifies. Hence it is manifest that, when St. James asks the question, "Can faith save him?" he does not mean the same faith spoken of by Paul when he affirms that "we are justified by faith;" consequently there can be no contradiction between them.

3. The two apostles do not use the term justification in the *same sense.*

That St. Paul uses the term as synonymous with pardon, or the remission of sins, has been abundantly proved. That St. James does not use the term in this sense, is evident from the case of Abraham appealed to for illustration.

In the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, where Moses records the transaction referred to by St. Paul, he declares that "he (Abraham) believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness."

Now, if we understand St. James to affirm that Abraham was not pardoned till years afterward, when he offered Isaac upon the altar, we make him contradict both Paul and Moses, and we may set ourselves to reconciling him with the latter as well as the former. But surely this view cannot be maintained. Hence we conclude that the two apostles could not use the term justification in the same sense.

St. James, by the term, can only mean that the faith of Abraham was manifested or proved to be genuine; his works were a manifestation or evidence of his former justification by faith; or they may be taken as a proof that he had not forfeited his justification by apostasy. So that, in this accommodated sense of the term, the only sense consistent with the history of the case, and a sense not at all used by St. Paul, Abraham was said by James to be justified "by works." Hence we conclude that, when St. James says, "Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only," he does not refer to the same kind of justification of which St. Paul treats; consequently there can be no contradiction between them. As this is the main reliance of the advocates for justification by evangelical obedience in opposition to the doctrine of justification by faith only, and as we find here nothing irreconcilable with the view of the doctrine which we have advocated, we deem it unnecessary to pursue this subject farther.

II. In the next place, we notice the objection that the doctrine of justification *by faith only is inconsistent with what the Scriptures teach concerning justification or remission of sins by baptism.*

If, by such as urge the above objection, the meaning be merely that baptism is a means of grace, which, like hearing the word, prayer, and various other means, should be used sincerely, in reference to, or as a help to, the exercise of evangelical faith, there can be no controversy; for all this is freely admitted. But if the meaning be that baptism is the condition of justification, in such sense as we have shown faith to be—that is, that it is a condition in such sense that none can be justified or have their sins remitted without it, and that all who are baptized are that moment justified—if this be the meaning, then do we most explicitly repudiate the notion as being unscriptural and pernicious.

Again: if it be contended that faith and baptism united are the condition of justification, in the sense above defined, this modification of the subject we consider equally unscriptural and pernicious with the one above named. The first view presented, which admits baptism, like the hearing of the gospel or prayer, to be a condition as a means of grace, being in no sense incompatible with the view presented of justification by faith only, we presume cannot be the sense in which the abettors of this objection understand the subject. The two latter views—that is, first, that baptism, or second, that faith and baptism united, are the condition of justification in the sense in which we have defined faith to be—must be considered as embracing the meaning of the objectors. We shall therefore endeavor to consider the claims of both these notions, in view of Scripture and reason.

This much we would here premise, that, as we have already shown from numerous and explicit declarations of Scripture that faith is the absolute and indispensable condition of justification, and as we have also shown that to suppose two such conditions involves a contradiction, it will necessarily follow that, if the Scriptures do authorize the view of the objectors, as just defined, the book of God must be charged with self-contradiction. But we rejoice to believe that a brief examination of the Scriptures relied upon by the abettors of the objection in question, will discover to us that we need have no such apprehension.

Those who make baptism the only appointed means of remission, rely almost exclusively upon the following passages:—Acts ii. 38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts xxii. 16: "And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." 1 Peter iii. 21: "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

We think it will be admitted by all intelligent and candid persons, that when a passage of Scripture is susceptible of two different constructions, the one perfectly consistent with all other scriptures, and the other irreconcilable with a number of plain declarations of scripture, the former interpretation should be adopted. Taking this rule of interpretation, which we think none can oppose, as the basis of our reasoning, we proceed to consider the above texts.

1. We will show that they may, without violence, be construed so as

not to conflict with the doctrine of justification by faith only, as we have defined and endeavored to establish it.

2. We shall show the violence to many plain declarations of the Bible, which the construction required by the objectors in question would involve.

Then we inquire, How can these passages be explained in accordance with our views of justification *by faith only?*

(1) First, in reference to the words of Peter, in the second chapter of The Acts, we remark, that the "remission of sins," it is true, is here promised in connection with baptism. But, we ask, is it not in connection with something more than baptism, both expressed and implied? The words are, "Repent, and be baptized." Here repentance is expressed, and faith is evidently implied, as being connected with repentance. If we deny this, we admit that sins *may be remitted without faith*, and contradict the whole tenor of Scripture; if we admit this, then we admit that these persons *may have been justified by faith only.*

Baptism is a sign or emblem of the cleansing of the soul, and all who faithfully use the sign have here the promise of the thing signified; but can any say that this is absolutely connected with the sign, whether it be faithfully used or not? We think this can scarcely be contended for; and if so, then it follows that baptism is not the essential condition in the case, but the faith with which it was required to be used. They are commanded to "repent, and be baptized, εἰς (*in order to*) the remission of sins"—that is, to use these means with reference to the end in view, which will certainly accompany the means when used in faith; but, at the same time, the faith implied as connected with, or as being obtained in, the use of the means, is the availing condition, as it alone can apprehend the merits of that "blood, without the shedding of which there can be no remission."

But that faith was here connected with the use of the means, and that it, and not baptism, nor yet baptism and faith taken together, was the real condition through which the spiritual blessings promised was communicated, we are not left to conclude by mere inference. The same apostle who here gave the command to "repent and be baptized," promising "remission of sins," and "the gift of the Holy Ghost," refers to this matter in the fifteenth chapter of The Acts, and testifies, (speaking of the Gentiles,) that God gave "them the Holy Ghost even as he did unto us, (the Jews,) and put no difference between us (Jews at Pentecost) and them, (the Gentiles,) *purifying their hearts by faith.*" Now, as justification, or "remission of sins," is inseparably connected with

the purification of the heart spoken of, we have the direct testimony of Peter himself, that these Jews at Pentecost were justified, not by baptism, but "by faith."

(2) The same mode of explanation which we have above presented will equally apply to the next passage—the words of Ananias to Saul—Acts xxii. 16: "Arise, and be baptized, and *wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*" Here baptism is not alone, but is connected with "calling on the name of the Lord," which is used here, as in the Scriptures frequently, as another expression for evangelical faith. This same person who was here commanded to "wash away his sins, calling on the name of the Lord," affirms, in the tenth chapter to the Romans, that "whosoever shall *call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved.*" It is beyond controversy that this implies *faith*, and therefore the passage in question, so far from disproving the doctrine of justification by faith, is no inconsiderable evidence in its favor.

(3) The last text we proposed to examine, in this connection, is 1 Peter iii. 21: "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us," etc. Here it may be sufficient to observe that the apostle, as if by special design to guard us against the notion which we are now opposing, takes special pains, by the use of parenthesis, to define the sense in which he uses the word baptism. "Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh"—that is, it is not the external rite of washing the body with water that "saves us," but it is "the answer of a good conscience toward God"—that is, it is the internal baptism, or purification of the heart by the Holy Spirit *through faith*, (which alone can impart a "good conscience,") that "doth now save us."

We think, from what we have now presented, it will be manifest to the unprejudiced mind, that the texts adduced may be construed, without violence, in consistency with the doctrine of justification by faith only.

III. We conclude the present chapter by presenting a few of the *difficulties* which are necessarily involved in the notion that baptism, or even baptism in connection with faith, is the condition of justification.

1 If baptism be the prescribed and only means of justification, or pardon, then it will follow, either that the ordinance must be repeated in order to forgiveness, every time the baptized person subsequently commits sin, or that there are two different methods of justification. The former is contrary to the practice of the apostolic, as well as all modern, Churches; the latter is contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture, which recognizes but one "sacrifice for sin," and but one mode of access to that sacrifice.

2. This scheme of justification leaves us without any evidence that the apostles themselves were ever justified; for, although they were commissioned to preach the gospel, and to baptize the nations, there is no proof that they themselves ever were baptized under the gospel economy. If it be said that they baptized each other, we reply, this is assertion without proof; but were we to admit the fact, some one of them must have been the first, and consequently he must have administered the ordinance while he himself was under condemnation.

3. This scheme, which inseparably connects the remission of sins with baptism, either implies that God saves the heathen without the "remission of sins" at all, or that none of them can be saved. Either position is repugnant to Scripture.

4. This scheme of justification is contrary to the Scripture history. Christ, when here upon earth, said to various individuals, "Thy sins are forgiven, go in peace and sin no more;" and to the thief on the cross, he said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." In these cases two things are certain: 1. There was real "remission of sins;" for so it is either undeniably implied, or expressly declared. 2. There was no baptism, nor any other work of obedience; but the simple exercise of faith. The language of the great Teacher was, "Be it according to thy faith;" "Thy faith hath saved thee;" or, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." There is not one word in reference to baptism. Indeed, it is undeniable that there was no such thing.

Again: while Peter was preaching in the house of Cornelius, (Acts x.,) and declaring "that whosoever *believeth* in him shall receive remission of sins," the Holy Ghost fell on the people, and they "magnified God." Now, that this implies the renewing influence of the Spirit, as well as miraculous gifts, is evident from the fact that they were immediately admitted to Church-fellowship, not as having the promise of remission in baptism which was proposed, but they were recommended to baptism on the ground of what they had already received.

If we say that they did not receive the "remission of sins" previous to baptism, then we admit that the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they were recommended by the apostle for Church-communion in consequence thereof, while they were in a state of guilt and condemnation; and, moreover, that Peter commanded them to be baptized, (although as Gentiles they, of all persons, the most needed full instruction,) without one word, so far as the narrative shows, on the subject of the "remission of sins," as connected with that baptism. If we say that they received "remission of sins" previous to baptism, then the point in controversy is fairly surrendered.

Nor can this be evaded by saying that this was the first introduction of the gospel among the Gentiles. What if it was? Unless it can be proved that God designed to make the plan of salvation different among the Gentiles in its commencement from what it was to be in its progress, the fact of its being the commencement of the gospel with them cannot affect the question before us in the least. To say that this case was an exception to the general rule, and that the case on the day of Pentecost was the true model of God's regular method of justification, is perfectly gratuitous. It is a human invention; a fiction of our own, without a word or syllable of Scripture for its support. Why not say that the case of Pentecost was the exception, and this, in the house of Cornelius, the regular plan? If we may make laws, and exceptions to laws, in the kingdom of Christ, at pleasure, the latter would seem rather the more plausible of the two, especially as the Christian Church has hitherto been mainly composed of Gentile converts.

The truth is, baptism, like other means of grace, may either precede or follow the act of faith which justifies. Faith being the great and only indispensable condition of pardon, and as it may be exercised either before, or after, or even in the act of, baptism, there is, on this hypothesis, no difficulty in harmonizing the two cases under consideration. But by the scheme of baptismal justification, as presented above, they are perfectly irreconcilable.

5. But the crowning objection to the whole scheme is its direct opposition to the general tenor of the Scriptures. If we admit it, we must directly contradict a vast number of plain declarations of the inspired record, and render a good portion of the Bible absurd and ridiculous. This may soon be made manifest.

(1) The Scriptures everywhere represent justification, or the forgiveness of sins, as the proper work of God; and nowhere is it presented as a work of man, either as the prime or constituted agent. When the great Jehovah proclaimed, under circumstances of the deepest solemnity, his character to Moses, one of its essential properties was declared to be the prerogative of "forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." When the Jews made against the Son of God the foul charge of blasphemy, their principal specification was that he had said to the paralytic, "Thy sins are forgiven thee:" this is blasphemy, exclaimed the Jews; for "Who can forgive sins but God?" and St. Paul declares, "It is God that justifieth." Now, if baptism be the act that justifies, and which invariably remits sin, does it not follow that the administrator of the ordinance is the agent in justification? And thus this doctrine is closely allied to the papal absurdity of remission by the priest.

(2) The Scriptures everywhere represent that justification *by works* is impossible; but if we are justified *by baptism*, since it is undeniable that it is, in the proper sense, a work, it follows that the word of God expressly contradicts itself; for the apostle declares "that a man is justified by faith *without the deeds of the law.*"

(3) If baptism be the essential and invariable condition of pardon, how can those scriptures be true which represent that salvation is possible to all men who have not squandered their day of gracious visitation; and that, not at some future period, but immediately, without any delay, except what arises from the state of the sinner's heart? That such is the general tenor of Scripture, we think will not be denied. Upon the supposition that faith is the grand essential condition, we perceive at once its perfect adaptation to all circumstances and conditions, to all climates and to all places. Neither cold, nor drought, nor time, nor place, nor disease, nor prison, which may frequently preclude the possibility of baptism, and consequently the possibility of salvation, according to the theory of remission which we now oppose, can insuperably obstruct the salvation of any man, on the principle of justification by faith.

6. Lastly: if the system of justification against which we have been speaking be admitted, then it will follow that, in all places where justification or salvation is spoken of, and any thing mentioned as the condition thereof, the specified condition may be omitted, and baptism substituted for it, in consistency with the gospel scheme.

Apply this rule to the following scriptures, and let any intelligent and sober person determine whether, as Baxter has expressed it, "the word of God" ought to be thus "audaciously corrected": "He that *believeth not* shall be damned." "He that *believeth* on him is not condemned; but he that *believeth not* is condemned already, because he hath *not believed* in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Now, if baptism be the absolute and essential condition of salvation, it necessarily follows that without violence it may be here substituted for faith—then the passages would read thus: "He that is *not baptized* shall be damned." "He that *is baptized* in his name is *not condemned;* but he that *is not baptized* in his name *is condemned* already, because he *hath not been baptized* in the name of the only begotten Son of God." The above is sufficient to show how ridiculous such a reading would render the word of God. Many such passages might be quoted, in which to substitute baptism for faith, would be nothing better than trifling with the sacred word.

We consider it needless to pursue the subject farther. We think we

have shown clearly that there can, in the very nature of the subject, be but *one* absolute and invariable condition of justification. And we think it must be obvious, from what has been presented, *what* that condition is. Baptism, it cannot be; for there is not one text in the Bible which attributes it to that ordinance alone. It is attributed to baptism, to repentance, to conversion, to prayer, and various other things, in connection with faith; but never to any one of them, nor to all of them taken together, in the absence of faith. On the other hand, there are near a hundred plain passages of Scripture that attribute salvation or justification (which mutually imply each other) to faith, *as the only essential condition.*

We therefore close, by repeating, as the conclusion of this investigation, the following declaration:—*Justification is by faith only, in such sense that none can be justified without faith, and all who have it are justified.* Or, in the words of the Methodist Discipline, (Art. IX.,) "That we are justified by *faith only*, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXXIII.

Question 1. What are the two principal grounds of objection to the doctrine of justification by faith alone?
2. By what scriptures is justification by evangelical obedience attempted to be sustained?
3. What kind of justification is by works, and in what sense?
4. How are James and Paul reconciled?
5. In what sense is it contended that justification is by baptism?
6. What scriptures are relied upon?
7. How may they be explained?
8. What is the first difficulty said to be connected with justification by baptism?
9. The second?
10. The third?
11. The fourth?
12. The fifth?
13. How is the last difficulty illustrated?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

REGENERATION.

THE divinity of the Bible is a beautiful and harmonious system, consisting of a variety of important principles, closely connected and mutually dependent upon each other. As the malformation of a single wheel would derange all the parts of a complicated piece of machinery, so a radical error in relation to one important doctrine generally extends its influence throughout the entire gospel system. This truth is nowhere more manifest than in connection with the subject now to be considered. Regeneration is a grand focal point, occupying a central position in theology. Here all the important doctrines of the gospel meet; and any radical error in the theories of men may generally be detected. For it may well be said, that whoever is sound in his entire view of the doctrine of regeneration, cannot be seriously erroneous in any essential doctrine of salvation; but, on the other hand, a radical error in this doctrine will not only extend its influence to almost every leading doctrine of Christianity, but it will endanger the salvation of the soul.

All this will be obvious when it is reflected that regeneration implies what is commonly understood by experimental religion. It contemplates that vital change in the moral character which constitutes the distinctive characteristic of the Christian, and which alone can give a meetness for heaven. He who holds not the essential truth here, errs where error may be tremendously fatal; but he whose theory, experience, and life, accord with the orthodox views of regeneration, may embrace in his system of theology much "wood, hay, and stubble," which shall be burned, "yet he himself shall be saved." In reference to this point especially, every serious inquirer after salvation should prayerfully "search the Scriptures," in constant remembrance of the divine monition, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." But he that not only fatally errs on this subject, but "teaches men" to follow him, "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the midst of the sea." May the Spirit of truth enlighten our understandings, that on this important subject we may have correct thoughts and speak right words!

I. *We inquire what is implied in regeneration.* This word occurs but twice in the New Testament—Matt. xix. 28, and Titus iii. 5. In the first-mentioned place, the Greek word is *παλιγγενεσία*, which signifies *reproduction, restoration*, or *renovation.* In Titus the word is the same, only varying in case, and has the same import. Although the same word, having the same general import, is used in both places, yet the learned have generally agreed that it does not imply, in both cases, a renovation of the same kind.

In Matthew, our Saviour says to the apostles: "Ye which have followed me, in the *regeneration* when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

The sense in this passage is materially affected by the punctuation. Whitby, Benson, Wesley, Clarke, Watson, and the learned commentators, with few exceptions, so far as we have examined, connect the clause, "in the regeneration," with what follows. But even then, they differ in the application. Some understand "the regeneration" to refer to the millennial state; others, to the general resurrection and day of judgment; but others, we think, with more propriety, refer it to the perfected gospel dispensation. This, then, being adopted as the most consistent interpretation of the passage, it follows that "regeneration," in this place, has no reference to the change of personal character constituting an individual a son of God, but a change in the state of things—a renovation of the Church, implying the dissolution of the old, and the establishment of the new, dispensation.

The passage in Titus reads as follows: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of *regeneration*, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Here, as most commentators think, "washing of regeneration" refers to the rite of baptism; but not to the external rite alone, or even mainly. The word "washing" more properly refers to the rite, and "regeneration" to the moral change signified thereby. So constantly was the thing signified present in the minds of the primitive Christians when they contemplated the sign, that they might, without danger of misapprehension, only mention the one, when both were evidently implied. But that "regeneration," in this place, implies the renewing of the heart, appears obvious from the succeeding clause, "and renewing of the Holy Ghost," which is intimately connected with, and exegetical of, what precedes. Hence we conclude that, in this passage, the term "regeneration" is applied to that moral renovation of character which constitutes an individual a child of God and an heir of eternal life.

So general has been the use of the term regeneration, as expressive of the moral change above mentioned, by theologians in all ages of the Church, that, even if the word itself were not found in Scripture, there could be no impropriety in its use, as its agreed sense is clearly and repeatedly expressed by various other terms. Thus it is called a "passing from death unto life"—a being "born again"—"born of the Spirit"—"born of God"—being "in Christ"—"a new creature"—"created anew," etc. When, therefore, we speak of "regeneration," we mean that change in man expressed in Scripture by such terms as we have just quoted. Our present inquiry is to ascertain what that change implies.

1. *It does not mean a mere conversion from infidelity to a historical belief of the facts, and a theoretical belief of the truths, of the gospel.*

Regeneration presupposes, but does not consist in, mere orthodox views in religion. A person may understand and believe, theoretically, the doctrines of the gospel, and yet be an utter stranger to experimental and practical godliness, and consequently in a state of alienation from God, and exposure to his wrath and righteous indignation.

2. *It does not consist in mere morality or external reformation.*

This, likewise, regeneration requires; but all this may exist while the heart is unrenewed, and the soul under condemnation.

3. *It does not mean a mere external profession of religion.*

God has instituted his Church in the world, and commanded that there should be "added unto the Church daily" such as embrace the gospel by faith; but in every age there have been a portion of spurious disciples—persons either deceived themselves, or wickedly deceiving others. "All are not Israel that are of Israel;" the "tares and the wheat" still "grow together;" and in the pale of the visible Church are embraced many who know nothing of the spirituality of religion.

4. *Nor does it imply a mere observance of all the forms, ordinances, and external duties of religion.*

Had this been all that was required, then the Pharisees would have been acceptable worshipers, and Saul of Tarsus might have pleaded the righteousness of the law. But it is "not every one that saith Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the kingdom;" nor he that merely performs the external duties of religion; but such as are Christians in heart, "delighting in the law of God after the inward man," and having "the power" as well as "the form of godliness."

5. *Regeneration does not imply new faculties of either body or soul.*

These have become deranged and contaminated by the Fall, but not annihilated. The ungodly have eyes and ears to read and hear the

word of God, as well as believers. And they likewise have all the faculties of the soul necessary for the exercise of every spiritual grace. Religion imparts no new faculty, but only regulates and purifies those that already exist.

But we now inquire, *positively, what does regeneration imply?*

1. Regeneration may be defined to be *a radical change in the moral character from the love, practice, and dominion of sin, to the love of God, and to the internal exercise, and external practice, of holiness.* Or, as Mr. Watson expresses it, it is "deliverance from the bondage of sin, and the power and the will to do all things which are pleasing to God, both as to inward habits and outward acts."

The above definition, it will readily appear, is sustained by the following passages:—1 John iii. 9: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Rom. vi. 14: "For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Verse 18: "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Verse 22: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness; and the end everlasting life."

The native state of the heart is hatred to God. "The carnal mind"—that is, the unrenewed sinful nature—"is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So, then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God." It is only divine grace, regenerating the soul, that can slay this enmity, "turn back our nature's rapid tide," and cause the affections of the soul to flow out after God and heavenly objects. The Apostle John says: "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God;" and, "He that loveth not knoweth not God." And again: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;" and farther: "This is the love of God that we keep his commandments;" and, "Every one which doeth righteousness is born of him."

From the scriptures adduced we may learn, 1. An unregenerate soul can neither love nor obey God while in that state. 2. Every regenerated soul loves God supremely, loves the people of God sincerely and affectionately, and engages willingly and heartily in the service of God, by obeying his commandments.

2. *Regeneration stands closely connected with, but is distinct from, justification and adoption.*

Mr. Wesley says, in his sermon on "The New Birth," that justification "relates to that great work which God does for us, in forgiving our

sins;" and that regeneration "relates to the great work which God does in us, in renewing our fallen nature." "In order of time, neither of these is before the other: in the moment we are justified by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Jesus, we are also 'born of the Spirit;' but in order of thinking, as it is termed, justification precedes the new birth. We first conceive his wrath to be turned away, and then his Spirit to work in our hearts."

In reference to regeneration, justification, and adoption, Mr. Watson observes: "They occur at the same time, and they all enter into the experience of the same person; so that no man is justified without being regenerated and adopted, and no man is regenerated and made a son of God who is not justified. Whenever they are mentioned in Scripture, they therefore involve and imply each other—a remark which may preserve us from some errors. Thus, with respect to our heirship, and consequent title to eternal life, in Titus iii. 7, it is grounded upon our justification: 'That being justified by his grace, we should be made *heirs* according to the hope of eternal life.' In 1 Peter i. 3, it is connected with our regeneration: 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance,' etc. Again, in Rom. viii. 17, it is grounded upon our adoption: 'If children, then heirs.' These passages are a sufficient proof that justification, regeneration, and adoption, are not distinct and different titles, but constitute one and the same title, through the gift of God in Christ, to the heavenly inheritance." (Theological Institutes.)

II. *We now inquire, How is the blessing of regeneration attained?* By what is the great change which it implies produced? Upon this important subject there are three leading theories.

1. The first theory is, that this change is effected by the direct influence of the Holy Spirit, and that the mind of man is perfectly passive therein.

2. The second is what may be styled the theory of self-conversion. It allows no direct divine influence, but maintains that the truth acts upon the mind by way of moral suasion, and through it alone the sinner submits to the plan of salvation, and obeys the divine command in the ordinance of baptism; and this is said to constitute regeneration.

3. The third theory occupies middle ground between the two above given, and, as we hope to be able to show, is in accordance with the Scriptures. It embraces both divine and human agency as being co-

cerned in the work. This theory is expressed by Dr. Fisk (see "Calvinistic Controversy") in the following two propositions: "1. The work of regeneration is performed by the direct and efficient operations of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. 2. The Holy Spirit exerts this regenerating power only on conditions, to be first complied with by the subject of the change."

We will now consider each of these theories in order.

1. The theory which teaches that man is *perfectly passive* in regeneration is properly the Calvinistic scheme, as the following quotations will evince.

In the Westminster Confesssion of Faith, Chapter X., we read these words: "This effectual call is of God's free and special grace *alone*, not from any thing at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it."

In Buck's Theological Dictionary, under the head of "Regeneration," and in reference to it, we have these words: "The properties of it (regeneration) are these: 1. It is a passive work, and herein it differs from conversion. In regeneration we are passive, and receive from God: in conversion we are active, and turn to him. 2. It is an irresistible, or rather an invincible, work of God's grace."

That the Calvinistic notion is not only that regeneration is a *passive* work, but that it is the *first* effect of saving grace on the heart, and precedes both repentance and faith, will be farther evident from the following quotations:—

The great Charnock, as quoted by Buck, uses these words: "In regeneration, man is wholly passive; in conversion, he is active. The first reviving us is wholly the act of God, without any concurrence of the creature; but after we are revived, we do actively and voluntarily live in his sight. Regeneration is the motion of God in the creature; conversion is the motion of the creature to God, by virtue of that first principle: from this principle all the acts of believing, repenting, mortifying, quickening, do spring. In all these a man is active; in the other he is merely passive." (See Buck's Theological Dictionary, under *Conversion.*)

In the works of Thomas Scott, Vol. IV., "Saving Faith," Part 2, Sec. 2, we have these words: "The first effect of the Lord's special love to those who are dead in sin and slaves to divers lusts, consists in quickening and regenerating them; and they are regenerated that they may be justified, by being made capable of believing in the Lord Jesus

Christ." "We are passive in receiving divine life, though it may be communicated while we are using the appointed means, or bestowing much diligence from natural principles; but we are active in turning to the Lord by true repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. The former is regeneration; the latter, conversion." "Regeneration precedes both faith and conversion."

Many more quotations from the most reputable Calvinistic authorities might be added, but we think that the above are sufficient to show that we are not misrepresenting the Calvinistic view, in the presentation above given. In the refutation of this theory of regeneration, we quote from Dr. Fisk, as follows:

"The notion that the mind is entirely passive in this change—that is, that nothing is done by the subject of it which is preparative or conditional, or in any way coöperative in its accomplishment, has been a prevailing sentiment in the various modifications of the old Calvinistic school. It is not, indeed, pretended that the mind is inactive either before or at the time this renovation is effected by the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, it is said that the sinner is resisting with all the power of the mind, and with all the obstinacy of the most inveterate enmity, up to the very moment, and in the very act, of regeneration.* So that the sinner is regenerated not only without his coöperation, but also in spite of his utmost resistance. Hence it is maintained that, but for the irresistible influence of the Holy Ghost upon the heart, no sinner would be regenerated.

"1. One of the leading objections to this view is that it is inseparably connected with the doctrine of particular and unconditional election. The two reciprocally imply each other, and must therefore stand or fall together. But this doctrine of particular and unconditional election has been sufficiently refuted, it is hoped; if so, then the doctrine of passivity and irresistible grace is not true.

"2. Another very serious difficulty which this theory (of regeneration) has to contend with is, that the Scriptures, in numerous passages, declare that the Spirit of God may be resisted, grieved, quenched, and utterly disregarded; and that the grace of God may be abused, or received in vain. The passages to establish these propositions are so frequent that I need not stop to point them out. But if this be so, then the grace of God and the Spirit of grace are not irresistible.

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*As Dr. Fisk uses "*conversion*" as synonymous with *regeneration*, we have generally substituted *regeneration*, as a term more definite, and less liable to be misunderstood. The Doctor's remarks only apply to *conversion* in the sense of *regeneration*

"3. It may be yet farther objected to this doctrine of the mind's passivity in regeneration that it is a virtual denial of all gracious influence upon the heart before regeneration. It has been shown that man is not able to comply with the conditions of salvation without grace, and that the gracious influences of the Divine Spirit are given to every sinner previous to regeneration. But there would be no necessity for this, and no consistency in it, if there are no conditions and no coöperation on the part of the sinner in the process of the new birth. Hence the advocates of this doctrine very consistently maintain that the first act of grace upon the heart of the sinner is that which regenerates him. Since, then, this theory conflicts with the Bible doctrine of a gracious influence anterior to regeneration, it cannot be admitted.

"4. This theory of regeneration removes all conditions on the part of the sinner to the removal of the power and guilt of sin. It teaches that if the sinner should do any thing acceptable to God, as a condition to his regeneration, it would imply he did not need regenerating; that such an idea, in fact, would be inconsistent with the doctrine of depravity, and irreconcilable with the idea of salvation by grace. And this is the ground on which the old Calvinists have so repeatedly charged us with the denial of the doctrines of grace, and with holding that we may be justified by our works. There is something very singular in these notions respecting the necessity of unconditional regeneration in order that it may be by grace. These same Calvinists tell us that the sinner can repent, and ought to repent, and that the Scriptures require it at his hand. What! is the sinner able and obliged to do that which would destroy the whole economy of grace—which would blot out the gospel, and nullify the atonement itself? Ought he to do that which would prove him a practical Pelagian and an operative workmonger? Is he, indeed, according to Calvinists themselves, required in Scripture to do that which would prove Calvinism false, and a conditional regeneration true? So it would seem. Put together these two dogmas of Calvinism: 1. The sinner is able and ought to repent. 2. The idea that the sinner does any thing toward his regeneration destroys the doctrine of depravity and of salvation by grace. I say, put these two together, and you have almost all the contradictions of Calvinism converged to a focus; and, what is most fatal to the system, you have the authority of Calvinism itself to prove that every intelligent probationer on the earth not only has the ability, but is authoritatively required, to give practical demonstration that the system is false! What is this but to say, 'You can, and you cannot'—if you do not, you will be justly condemned—if you do, you will ruin the gospel

system, and yourself with it? When such glaring paradoxes appear, there must be something materially wrong in at least some parts of the system.

"5. But the inconsistency is not its only, and certainly not its most injurious, characteristic. In the same proportion as men are made to believe that there are no conditions on their part to their regeneration, they will be likely to fall into one of the two extremes of carelessness, or despair; either of which persisted in would be ruinous. I cannot doubt but that, in this way, tens of thousands have been ruined. We should infer that such would be the result of the doctrine from only understanding its character; and I am fully satisfied that, in my own personal acquaintance, I have met with hundreds who have been lulled in the cradle of Antinomianism on the one hand, or paralyzed with despair on the other, by this same doctrine of passive, unconditional regeneration. Calvinists, it is true, tell us this is the abuse of the doctrine; but it appears to me to be the legitimate fruit. What else could we expect? A man might as well attempt to dethrone the Mediator as to do any thing toward his own regeneration. Teach this, and carelessness ensues; Antinomian feelings will follow; or, if you arouse the mind by the curse of the law, and by the fearful doom that awaits the unregenerate, what can he do? Nothing! Hell rises from beneath to meet him, but he can do *nothing*. He looks until he is excited to frenzy, from which he very probably passes over to raving madness, or settles down into a state of gloomy despair.

"6. Another very decisive objection to this doctrine is the frequent, and I may say uniform, language of Scripture. The Scriptures require us to seek, ask, knock, come to Christ, look unto God, repent, believe, open the door of the heart, receive Christ, etc. No one can fail to notice how these instructions are sprinkled over the whole volume of revelation. And, what is specially in point here, all these are spoken of, and urged upon us, as conditions of blessings that shall follow—even the blessings of salvation, of regeneration—and as conditions too, without which we cannot expect these blessings. Take one passage of many: 'As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.' If any one doubts whether 'becoming the sons of God,' as expressed in this text, means regeneration, the next verse will settle it: 'Which were *born*, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' John i. 12, 13. The latter verse I may have occasion to remark upon hereafter: it is quoted here to show that the new birth is undoubtedly the subject here spoken of. And we are here expressly

taught, in language that will bear no other interpretation, that receiving Christ and believing on his name are the conditions of regeneration. If there were no other passage in the Bible to direct our minds on this subject, this plain, unequivocal text ought to be decisive. But the truth is, this is the uniform language of Scripture. And are there any passages against these? any that say we cannot come, cannot believe, seek, etc.? or any that say this work of personal regeneration is performed independent of conditions? I know of none which will not fairly admit of a different construction. We are often met with this passage: 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.' (See Rom. ix. 16.) But whoever interpreteth this of personal and individual regeneration, can hardly have examined the passage carefully and candidly. But we are told, again, it is God that renews the heart; and if it is his work, it is not the work of the sinner. I grant this: this is the very sentiment I mean to maintain; but then there may be conditions—there are conditions—or else we should not hear the Psalmist *praying* for this, in language that has been preserved for the edification of all subsequent generations: 'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.' This is a practical comment on Christ's conditional salvation: 'Ask and ye shall receive.' Since, then, this doctrine of passive unconditional regeneration implies unconditional election—since it is in opposition to those scriptures which teach that the Spirit and grace of God may be resisted and received in vain—since it is a virtual denial of all gracious influences upon the heart before regeneration—since it leads the abettors of the theory into gross contradictions by their endeavors to reconcile the *can* and the *cannot* of their system—since its practical tendency is to make sinners careless, or drive them to despair—and, finally, since it contradicts that numerous class of scriptures, some of which are very unequivocal, that predicate the blessings of regeneration and justification upon certain preparatory and conditional acts of the sinner—therefore we conclude that this theory cannot be true." (Calvinistic Controversy.)

2. The *second* theory of regeneration is that which rejects from this work all *direct influence of the Holy Spirit*, and attributes the entire change to a mere intellectual process, by which the truth of the gospel is accredited, and an external obedience rendered, to the rite of baptism.

As the advocates of some modification of this theory, we may set down Socinians, Arians, Unitarians, some of the New School Presbyterians of the United States, and the Rationalists of Germany. These several

parties have differed considerably among themselves on this subject. Some have confined the work of regeneration entirely to the mental operation, and taught that the new birth means only the change of the mind and disposition of the soul produced by the force of truth, according to the principles of *moral suasion;* others have contended that an individual cannot be regenerated till submission to *the rite of baptism* is added to the mental operation above specified. But they have all agreed in rejecting the *direct operation of the Spirit* from any agency in this work.

(1) The first leading objection to this theory is, *that it is unphilosophical.*

It involves what seems to be irreconcilable with the nature of things. To avoid misapprehension, and cut off a common method of evasion, we here remark that the advocates of this theory have been far from admitting that they reject the operation of the Spirit in the accomplishment of this great work. Indeed, they have represented it as exceedingly unjust — as gross misrepresentation and intolerant persecution, that they should be so charged. But all this brandishing about the operations of the Spirit, persecution, etc., is nothing but a ruse by which to evade the subject. When they are charged with denying the "operations of the Spirit," a definite and commonly understood meaning is attached to that phrase. Hence, to frame a different meaning for it, and then to raise the cry of misrepresentation and persecution, because they are charged with rejecting a doctrine which they admit, is nothing but an evasion of the subject. When they acknowledge the operations of the Spirit, they mean by that phrase something entirely different from what it implies when they are charged with denying it. Therefore it is evident that if the thing which they are charged with denying is not the same thing which they acknowledge, they have not met, but merely evaded, the charge.

By the "operations of the Spirit," the advocates for this theory merely mean that the sacred penmen were inspired by the Spirit to write the Scriptures, and endued with the power of working miracles for their confirmation; and that this word, thus originally inspired and confirmed, now operates on the minds of men so as to produce regeneration, without any farther influence of the Spirit than what is thus indirectly exerted through the written word. Yet they contend that because the Spirit originally inspired the word, all the influence of the word results from that original operation of the Spirit. Whereas the opposers of this theory, by the operation of the Spirit in regeneration, mean a direct exertion of influence by the Spirit on the heart of the sinner.

To render these two different views more clearly distinct, we may use a figure of illustration. Thus, the divine influence which the advocates of this theory admit, resembles the influence of the skill and ingenuity of an artist, when he forms a complicated piece of machinery, such, for instance, as a clock or a watch. The well-arranged parts of the machinery may continue to perform the office assigned them, and the hour may be correctly described by the time-piece, even for years after it has passed from the hand of the artisan. Thus, while the clock or the watch continues to run, we still, in an indirect sense, attribute its operation to the skill of the workman. Though he may be thousands of miles distant, or even slumbering in his grave, we may still say that his skill and ingenuity are operating through the machinery that he formed. Just in the same sense the theory of regeneration now in question allows the influence of the Spirit of God. They admit that God by his Spirit established the gospel, inspired the word, arranged the system, and set the machine to work; but contend that no farther direct energy is needed. The Spirit, say they, operates through the word like the skill of the man through the watch, and the immediate influence of the Spirit is no more essential to the regeneration of the soul, than the immediate presence and influence of the artisan is indispensable to the operations of the machinery.

On the other hand, the opposers of this theory would illustrate their view of divine influence in regeneration by the figure of "a sword," which is a passive instrument, only moving as it is moved. Thus it is contended that, as the sword can only become the instrument of death in the hand of the warrior by whom it is wielded, so the word of God can only be the instrument of regeneration in the hand, and by the direct energy, of the Holy Spirit. According to this view, there is a direct and real operation of the Spirit; but, according to the former notion, there is no divine power exerted at the time—no real influence of the Spirit at all; but merely a secondary, figurative, or indirect influence.

From what has been said, we think it will readily appear *that the theory under consideration is unphilosophical, and repugnant to the nature of things.* It implies an effect without an adequate cause. Man is a being, embracing in his complex character, physical, intellectual, and moral powers. These powers, though intimately connected, are really distinct in their nature. And a power of a correspondently different nature is required to effect a change in them. To effect a physical change, a physical influence is requisite; to effect an intellectual change, an intellectual process is requisite; and to effect a moral

change, moral power is required. Now, to show that it is impossible, in the very nature of things, for regeneration to be effected by mere intellectual or physical influence, it is only necessary to reflect on the real nature of the change which regeneration implies. What kind of a change is it? It is not physical; no new faculties are imparted to the body. The feeble constitution is not rendered robust, nor the literally lame, or halt, or blind, restored to soundness. Were it a change of this kind, there would be some philosophy in resorting to physical operations, or applying physical influences. Nor is it an intellectual change. No new faculties of mind are imparted. The unlettered man is not thereby rendered an adept in science, nor the man of naturally feeble intellect exalted to an equality in mental power with Locke or Bacon. Were it a change of this kind, there would be some philosophy in resorting to intellectual operations. But what should we say of the scribe who would direct the sinner to engage in the study of Euclid in order to effect the regeneration of his soul? And yet if this change only implied the improvement of the intellectual faculties, such would be a rational course.

The change in question is neither physical nor intellectual. We would not say that it has no connection with the body or the intellect. We are required to attend upon the means of grace, to read or hear the word, and to endeavor to understand the truths of the gospel. But all these constitute no part of, nor do they, to any degree, necessarily result in, regeneration. The change is of a nature radically different. It is not physical, nor yet intellectual, either in whole or in part; but it is solely moral or spiritual. To produce this, there must be an adequate cause. Physical and intellectual causes, we have seen, are inadequate. What, then, we ask, is the power adequate to the performance of the work? We answer, that, as body can operate on body, and mind on mind, so spirit can operate on spirit. He who is "the Father of the spirits of all flesh," alone is able to form the soul anew—to change the moral character—to "take away the heart of stone, and give a heart of flesh."

I know that it is attempted to evade the argument for divine influence, as founded on the nature of things, by saying that, "although none but God can regenerate the soul, yet he effects this work by the agency of instituted means, without any direct divine influence at the time." And the operations of nature are appealed to as illustration and proof.

This maneuver of the advocates of the theory of self-conversion, and water-regeneration, divulges the foundation of their entire theory. It

is founded upon a false and infidel view of the nature of divine providence. Indeed, the denial of a particular providence, and the rejection of divine influence in regeneration, are necessary parts of the same system. But let us for a moment contemplate the subject. Are we to suppose that, because God may operate through the instrumentality of second causes, therefore he does not operate at all? Are we to suppose that when he formed the material universe he impressed upon matter self-controlling energy—that he endued the earth, the sea, and all things else, with inherent power of self-government; and that the Deity, except in cases of miracle, has had no more direct agency in the things of the world since creation's birth, than if there were no God in existence? Really it seems that this is implied in the scheme before us. It is nothing better than a modest method to put God out of the world; it leads directly to Atheism.

As a refutation of the whole scheme, we ask, What are the laws of nature but the method by which God controls the world? And what the power of attraction, the process of vegetation, or any of the operations of nature around us, but the immediate energy of God? Let but the divine energy be withheld, and vain would be the labor of the husbandman; the rays of the sun, the fruitfulness of the soil, the "showers that water the earth," could never produce a single spire of grass. Just so the means of grace; the reading and hearing of the word; the intellectual study of the evidences of Christianity, or the doctrines of the gospel; and submission to baptism, and every other external rite of the Church—any of these, or all of them combined, can no more regenerate a soul, without the direct influence of the power of God, than they can create a world. As in nature, so in grace, "Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase." The great change in the human soul, by which it is "created anew in Christ Jesus," is a work which God has delegated to no ordinance or means of grace; to no minister nor angel; but reserved to himself alone. Therefore we conclude that the theory of regeneration in question is unphilosophical, and irreconcilable with the nature of things.

(2) A second objection to this theory of regeneration is, *that it is at war with the doctrine of man's native and total depravity.*

Indeed, few have ever advocated it, but such as have denied total depravity. And in this respect, though inconsistent with Scripture, they have been consistent with themselves. For if man, by the mere exercise of his native mental powers, and submission to baptism, can effect the regeneration of his soul, then he cannot be so totally depraved and helpless as to be able to do nothing toward his salvation without

the aid of divine influence. We think it must be obvious that the doctrine of regeneration, without divine influence directly exerted, cannot stand with the doctrine of total depravity; and, as the latter has been sufficiently proved in former chapters, we add nothing on that point here.

(3) A third objection to this theory is, *that it conflicts with those Scriptures which make it our duty to pray to God for regeneration and its concomitant blessings.*

That such is the Scripture requirement, we think can scarcely be denied. The command is, Seek, ask, knock. The Holy Spirit is promised to them that "ask;" and St. Paul declares, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Hence, in praying for the Spirit of God, or for the pardon of sins, we are praying for regeneration—these blessings involve each other. But, we ask, on the supposition that God has nothing to do, directly, with regeneration, how can we consistently implore his aid? Will we call on God to do for us what he has made it our duty and privilege to do for ourselves? Or will we beseech him to do what we believe would be contrary to the gospel?

According to this theory, for a sinner to be petitioning the throne of God for "a new heart," the "remission of sins," or the blessing of "salvation," would render it suitable for the Almighty to rebuke him, by saying: "Why call upon me on this subject? Have I not given you the power to effect this work without my aid! Go, read the Bible, believe the evidence there, and be baptized, and you may thus regenerate your own souls, by merely exercising your native powers. You have the Scriptures, and you have your native faculties: these are all sufficient; but if they were not, the age of miracles is past, and I exert no direct influence on the hearts of men; and why, therefore, will you waste your time in prayer?"

Such a view of the subject seems more congenial to infidelity than religion; but, we confess, to our mind it appears perfectly consistent with the theory before us. Would a man act consistently to pray to God for the Scriptures, while he has them already in possession? Surely not; and why? Simply because God has already conferred the blessing. No more could he, according to this theory, ask God for the regeneration of his soul; for, so far as the exertion of the divine influence is concerned, that work is already as completely accomplished as it ever will be. God will do nothing more.

(4) This theory of regeneration, by the mere exercise of our native powers, *contradicts those scriptures that attribute this work directly to God*

These passages are numerous and explicit. It is said: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not *of blood*, nor *of the will of the flesh*, nor *of the will of man*, but *of God*." John i. 12, 13. Here "the power to become the sons of God," or being "born," is not represented to be by mental or physical influence—it is attributed directly to "God."

Again: the very terms by which this change is uniformly expressed, if it be not effected by a direct influence of God, are calculated to mislead. It is called a "creation," a "translation," "renewal," and it is repeatedly expressed by the phrase, "born of God."

We therefore conclude that, as this theory is unphilosophical, or irreconcilable with the nature of things — as it is at war with the doctrine of total depravity—as it conflicts with the Scripture presentation of the duty of prayer—and as it contradicts all those passages which attribute this work directly to God—it cannot be true. The two theories which we have considered err on opposite extremes—the former, by attributing the work to God, irrespective of the agency of man; the latter, by attributing it entirely to man, independent of divine influence.

3. The third theory of regeneration contains what we believe to be the Scripture view of the subject. It is embraced, as before said, in these two propositions:

(1) *It is a work performed by the direct and efficient operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart.*

(2) *The Holy Spirit exerts this regenerating power only on conditions required of man.*

The first position, we think, needs no additional proof. On the last we will observe:

(1) It cannot be maintained that the *prima facie* evidence of Scripture is opposed to conditional regeneration. To quote all the passages which unequivocally teach this idea, would be to transcribe much of the sacred volume. Let it suffice that we notice the principal objection to this doctrine.

It is said by Calvinists *to conflict with the Scripture view of human depravity and salvation by grace.* In reply to this objection, we remark, 1. It might be inconsistent with the doctrine of human depravity, if it were contended that the sinner performs these conditions of himself, independent of divine grace; but such is not the fact. It is "God that worketh in us," that we may have the ability to comply with the conditions prescribed: of ourselves we can do nothing. God imparts

the grace, which we are required to improve; and when the condition is performed, the promise is sure. As to the second branch of the objection, we reply, that the conditions of regeneration cannot destroy the idea of *grace*, unless those conditions are considered *meritorious*. Grace or favor does not cease to be such because it is conferred according to a certain plan. The conditions of salvation do not change the nature of the blessing bestowed: they only describe the method of bestowment.

From all that has been said, we conclude that regeneration is neither a work of God without the agency of man, nor a work of man without the influence of God, but *a work of God performed on conditions required of man*.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXXIV.

QUESTION 1. Is regeneration intimately connected with other leading doctrines?
2. In what places does the term occur in Scripture?
3. What is its literal import?
4. How is it to be understood in Matthew?
5. How in Titus?
6. By what other terms is regeneration expressed in Scripture?
7. Does regeneration consist in a historical and theoretical belief of the truth?
8. Does it consist in mere morality?
9. Does it consist in a mere external profession, and observance of the ordinances and external duties of religion?
10. Does it imply new faculties of body or soul?
11. How, then, may it be defined?
12. By what texts is this definition sustained?
13. How is regeneration distinguished from justification and adoption?
14. Are these blessings simultaneous?
15. What three leading theories on the attainment of regeneration have been advanced?
16. By what quotations is the theory of passive regeneration shown to be Calvinistic?
17. Is this theory inseparably connected with particular and unconditional election?
18. What is the second argument against this theory?
19. The third?
20. The fourth?
21. The fifth?
22. The sixth?
23. Who have been the advocates of the second theory?
24. Have they been agreed among themselves?
25. How is this theory shown to be unphilosophical?
26. In what two different senses is the influence of the Spirit understood?
27. How is the argument for divine influence, founded on the nature of things, attempted to be evaded?
28. How is the evasion met?
29. How is this theory shown to be inconsistent with total depravity?
30. How does it conflict with the duty of prayer?
31. Wherein is it contrary to those scriptures which attribute this change directly to God?
32. What are some of those scriptures?
33. In what two propositions is the Scripture theory contained?
34. What is the principal Calvinistic objection to this theory?
35 How is the *first* branch of the objection answered?
36 How is the *second* answered?
37 What is the grand concluding proposition?

CHAPTER XXXV.

ADOPTION—WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

ONE of the great benefits of redemption, concomitant with justification, is *adoption*. We consider—

I. THE NATURE OF ADOPTION.

Adoption may be defined, "that act of God's free grace by which, upon our being justified by faith in Christ, we are received into the family of God, and entitled to the inheritance of heaven."

1. Adoption *grows out of the fall of man*, and his consequent alienation from God. That state from which adoption is a deliverance, is thus described by the apostle: "Ye were without Christ, being *aliens* from the commonwealth of Israel, and *strangers* from the covenants of promise, having *no hope*, and *without God* in the world." Eph. ii. 12. Again: "And you that were sometime *alienated* and *enemies* in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." Col. i. 21. Into the condition thus described all men have been brought by sin; but from this state adoption is a deliverance.

2. Adoption implies *deliverance from all servile fear*. "Ye have not received the spirit of *bondage* again to *fear*." Rom. viii. 15.

3. It implies filial confidence in God, as our *Father*. God now graciously receives us as his revolted but returning children, according to the promise of his word: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

4. Adoption *follows immediately upon justification*. The Spirit of adoption is "sent forth," and that "into our hearts," the very moment we are pardoned and born of God. Justification, regeneration, and adoption, though distinct from each other in nature, are always simultaneous in occurrence. Justification removes our *guilt*, which is a barrier in the way of our admission into God's family; regeneration changes our *hearts*, imparting a fitness for admission into that family; and adoption *actually receives* us therein, recognizing us as God's chil

dren redeemed by Christ, washed and sanctified by his blood and Spirit, and admitted into covenant relation with God as our Father.

5. This state *entitles us to all the immunities of God's Church on earth;* to the comforting influence of his Holy Spirit; to the guidance of his counsel; and to the protection of his grace; and seals us heirs of the eternal inheritance of the saints in glory. How exalted the relation thus conferred! How precious the privileges and consolations it imparts! How enrapturing the hope it inspires! Well might St John exclaim: "Beloved, now are we the *sons of God,* and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." 1 John iii. 2.

II. *We now consider* THE EVIDENCE OF ADOPTION.

This, according to the teachings of the New Testament, is to be found in *the direct witness of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the Christian.*

The doctrine here stated, while it has ever furnished a theme for sport and ridicule to the infidel world, has been denied by many professing the Christian name, and explained away by others. Yet we think that the following passages will clearly evince that it is taught in Scripture:—

Rom. viii. 15, 16: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Gal. iv. 4, 5, 6: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." 1 John v. 10: "He that believeth on the Son of God *hath the witness in himself.*" That the above passages teach that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the adoption of the Christian, is undeniable. But, we inquire, in what sense is that winesss to be understood?

1. Some have contended that it is only the privilege of a "favored few" to know that their sins are forgiven; and that, consequently, the witness in question can be possessed by none others.

To this it is a sufficient reply to say, that such view of the subject is perfectly arbitrary. The Scriptures make no such distinction, but speak of this blessing as being alike attainable by all who seek it. It is in reference to all who have been delivered from "the spirit of bondage to fear," and who have "received the Spirit of adoption," that the apostle declares that they are permitted to "cry, Abba, Father;" and

have "the Spirit itself" to "bear witness with their spirit, that they are the children of God." Again, in reference to the Galatians, God is said to have "sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts," not because they are a class of Christians favored above others, but "because they are sons"—that is, because they are Christians in the proper sense of the term. And in John, "he that believeth on the Son of God" (not a favored part of such) is said to have "the witness in himself." Hence it appears that, to restrict this privilege to a favored few of the people of God, is to treat with great disrespect the plain language of Holy Writ.

2. Others, who have admitted this witness to be the common privilege of believers, have confounded the witness of the Spirit of God with the witness of our own spirit; and so allowed but *one* witness, while the apostle plainly teaches *two*. "His Spirit beareth witness"—not *to*, but "with our spirit." The "Spirit of God" is one witness, and our own spirit is another. We shall endeavor to show, in the farther examination of this subject, that the witness of the Spirit of God is not only distinct from that of our own spirit, but that it is *direct*.

3. That we may come to a full understanding of this subject, we may now remark, that our justification or acceptance with God either can be known by us, or it cannot. To suppose that it cannot, would leave us in a state of remediless doubt and distress, little better than despair itself. Such a position would deprive the Christian of all solid comfort in this life, and be alike contrary to the views of all orthodox divines, and to the word of God itself. If, then, as we are bound to conclude, there is a method by which the Christian may, in this life, gain a knowledge of his acceptance with God, we inquire, how is that knowledge obtained?

4. Justification, or pardon, is acknowledged to be an act of the Divine Mind, by which we are acquitted from the sentence of guilt, and admitted into the Divine favor. If so, it necessarily follows that none but God can *know* that this act has certainly been performed, unless God see proper in some way to give evidence of the fact. No witness can possibly testify beyond the extent of his own knowledge; hence it is clear that, as none but God can certainly know, except by testimony, that we are justified, so none but he can bear original testimony to the fact. Now, we think it will appear, upon a careful examination, that the indirect testimony of the Spirit amounts substantially to the same as the testimony of our own spirit, and, as such, must be inadequate to the purpose in hand.

5. By the witness of our own spirit is generally understood *our consciousness of possessing those characteristics described in Scripture as constituting the Christian.*

This testimony of our own spirit, we do not possess by intuition, but it is derived through a process of reasoning. Thus the Bible describes certain moral qualities of the soul, and moral habits of life, as belonging peculiarly to the children of God. By the exercise of our own consciousness, and a contemplation of our own lives, we may form an opinion concerning our character; then, by the exercise of our reasoning faculty, we may compare our character with the character described in Scripture as pertaining to the child of God, and rationally draw the conclusion that we sustain that relation. This is the only plan by which our own spirit can witness to the fact. Now, to say that this is also the sense in which we are to understand that the Spirit of God witnesses to our adoption, we think, is an erroneous view of the subject, as appears from the following considerations:

(1) This is evidently, as already stated, to confound the two witnesses —to make the witness of our own spirit and that of the Spirit of God essentially the same, and really but one witness; whereas the Scriptures plainly teach that there are two witnesses—"the Spirit of God," in the heart of the Christian, "crying, Abba, Father," and "his own spirit," uniting in testimony to the same fact.

(2) The above view of the subject appears evidently to exhibit the witness of the Spirit in a sense entirely inadequate to the purpose for which, according to the Scriptures, it is designed. The witness of the Spirit is designed to give us an assurance of our adoption, so satisfactory as to amount to real knowledge. Now, as the forgiveness of sin, or adoption into the family of God, is an act of God, it follows that God must be the prime witness of the fact; but to suppose that this witness is only given in the indirect sense, as described, is in effect to discard the witness altogether, so far as the simple question of adoption is concerned. For, if the description of the Christian character given in Scripture by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is all the agency of the Spirit allowed in the witness in question, then it follows that this witness does not testify at all to the adoption of any individual.

The Scriptures only testify to the general truth that all who possess a certain moral character are the children of God; but with regard to the question whether this or that individual possesses that character or not, they are silent. As to the simple fact of my adoption, according to the above theory, it is not learned from the testimony of the

Spirit, but must be a matter of inference, derived through a process of reasoning.

Hence, unless we presuppose the infallibility of our reasoning powers, we may have erred in this intellectual process; we may have formed an improper view of our own moral character; we may have misunderstood the Scriptures in reference to the moral character peculiar to the children of God; or we may have blundered in the comparison of ourselves with the Scripture requirement, and in the conclusion, drawn from such comparison, that we are the children of God. In all, or any of these particulars, we may have erred; and if so, it follows that the conclusion arising from this process of ratiocination cannot amount to certain knowledge, but can, at best, be but probable conjecture. Therefore it is clear that, as it is the privilege of the Christian to *know* that he belongs to the family of God, it must be possible for him to have an evidence of the fact superior to the indirect testimony now in question.

(3) Again: this indirect witness, from its very nature, cannot be possessed by the Christian *at the time he first becomes a child of God;* for, as it results from a consciousness of having the "fruits of the Spirit," or of bringing forth those good works which flow from a living faith, time must be allowed for those fruits to grow, and opportunity afforded for those good works to be performed, before they can have an existence; and to suppose that we have so clear and definite a knowledge of their existence as thereby to infer our sonship, previous to their actual existence, is absurd. But all who "are sons," are said to "have the Spirit of God's Son in their hearts, crying, Abba, Father;" hence, this witness must be something more direct and immediate than can result from the inferential reasoning above described.

(4) Again: these "fruits of the Spirit," from which we are supposed to infer our adoption, from their very nature cannot precede the knowledge of our acceptance, but must flow from that knowledge. The most important of these fruits are "love, joy, and peace:" now, these graces and fruits of the Spirit, in the sense in which they are understood, cannot be exercised, except by such as have a knowledge of their acceptance with the Lord. "We *love* him," saith St. John, "because he first loved us." But how could his love to us influence our love to him while we have no evidence of that fact? And how can we have an evidence of his love to us while we are "aliens," and enemies by wicked works? To "love God," in the filial sense of the text, is impossible to any but a child of God. Hence an individual must be a child of God before he can yield this fruit of the Spirit; and if, as St. Paul says, all

who "are sons" have "the Spirit of adoption sent forth into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father," they must have this Spirit to witness to their adoption before they can bring forth the fruits of the Spirit; consequently they cannot derive this witness from a consciousness of those fruits.

The same may be said of "peace and joy." We do not gain a knowledge of our acceptance from a consciousness of peace and joy; but, on the contrary, this peace and joy result from a knowledge of our acceptance. "Therefore, being justified by faith," saith St. Paul, "we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." This peace evidently results from justification; and if so, that justification must be a subject of knowledge. A condemned criminal does not rejoice because a pardon has been granted, until he gains a knowledge of the fact. So it appears that as peace and joy are the "fruits of the Spirit," and as these do not precede, but follow, a knowledge of our acceptance, so the witness by which we gain this knowledge must precede the peace and joy resulting therefrom.

6. By some it has been alleged "that this witness of the Spirit does not result from a consciousness of the fruits of the Spirit in general, but from *a consciousness of possessing saving faith.*" This scheme labors under several very serious difficulties.

(1) The Scriptures give no intimation that we gain a knowledge of our acceptance from a consciousness that we possess faith; but everywhere this knowledge is attributed to the conjoint testimony of the Spirit of God with that of our own spirit.

(2) If we gain a knowledge of our acceptance with God from a consciousness that we possess faith, by that faith must be implied either faith in any conceivable degree, or faith in a certain definite degree. To suppose the former, would be to adopt the unscriptural and absurd hypothesis that every degree of faith is really justifying. To suppose the latter, would be to maintain that God has annexed the promise of pardon to faith in a certain limited and definite extent, which is contrary to fact. There is, perhaps, no problem in Christian character more difficult to solve than the precise amount or degree of faith which we possess at any given time. Before we can found our knowledge of acceptance on our consciousness of possessing faith, we must not only know that there is a certain degree of faith to which God has annexed the promise of pardon, and what that degree of faith is, but we must also certainly know that we possess that definite degree of faith; both of which are impossible.

(3) Again, were it true that God had annexed the promise of pardon

to a certain definite degree of faith, and that we could always certainly determine whether we possess that degree of faith or not, still this theory would labor under the insuperable difficulty that it would make the knowledge of our acceptance precede our acceptance itself; in other words, it would involve the absurdity of teaching that we may *know* that we are accepted before we are accepted. For justifying faith, according to the Scriptures, *precedes*, and is the condition of, pardon; but if a knowledge of our acceptance always accompanies justifying faith, then a knowledge of our acceptance must precede that acceptance. In other words, we must first know that we are accepted before we can be accepted; so that we may be well assured that our knowledge of our acceptance does not result from a consciousness that we possess faith.

From all that has been said, we arrive at the conclusion—that, as the testimony of God's Spirit is not spoken of in Scripture as the peculiar privilege of a favored few, but as alike pertaining to all the "sons of God"—that, as this witness is not identical with the witness of our own spirit, but a distinct witness, bearing conjoint testimony with our own spirit—that as, according to the Scriptures, it is the privilege of Christians to know that they are accepted of the Lord—that, as none but God can bear primary testimony to this fact—that, as the indirect testimony of the Holy Spirit is substantially nothing but the witness of our own spirit—that, as such testimony is inadequate for the purpose for which the witness of the Spirit is designed—that, as neither a consciousness of the "fruits of the Spirit" in general, nor of faith, can impart a knowledge of our acceptance with God at the time the witness of the Spirit is said to be possessed—from all these considerations we arrive at the conclusion, that the witness of the Holy Spirit, as possessed by the Christian, must be *direct and distinct in its nature from the witness of our own spirit.*

If called upon for a full explanation of the *manner* in which the Spirit operates so as to produce this direct witness, we are constrained to confess our weakness; the subject is "too wonderful for us." "The wind bloweth where it listeth," but we cannot comprehend "whence it cometh or whither it goeth;" so the Spirit of God, in a manner to us incomprehensible, moves on the hearts of men, and bears witness to the believer that he is a child of God. But as to the *fact* of this witness, it is a matter expressly revealed.

We cannot better express the sense in which we understand the fact, than by adopting the language of Mr. Wesley:

"The testimony of the Spirit is an inward impression on the soul.

whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me; and that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God."

III. We will close this chapter by noticing some of the leading *objections* to the doctrine of the direct witness of the Spirit for which we have contended.

1. It is objected, that "*two witnesses to the same fact, if both good, are not needed; and if not good, they are useless.*"

To this we reply, that the two witnesses do not both depose directly to the same fact. The Spirit of God alone is directly and immediately cognizant of the fact of our adoption, and it alone bears direct testimony to that fact. Our own spirit, though a conjoint witness with the Spirit of God to the same fact, testifies, not directly, but indirectly. It witnesses to our adoption, only by assuring us that we have the *direct* witness of the Spirit of God to that fact. Thus in the hour of conversion, before we have time for good works, or the fruits of the Spirit, or even for engaging in a course of reasoning by which to infer our adoption by comparing our experience with the Scripture marks of regeneration, the Holy Spirit directly assures us that God loves us, and freely accepts us in Christ Jesus: immediately upon this evidence of the pardoning love of God, "we love him because he first loved us," joy and peace spring up in the soul, and then first we receive the witness in our hearts, and hear—

> "Thy sins are forgiven! accepted thou art!
> I listened, and heaven sprung up in my heart."

But how soon will we have occasion for the conjoint testimony of our own spirit! We may be tempted to believe that this direct witness is all a delusion; but the witness of our own spirit—our consciousness that we have the fruits of the Spirit—confirms us in the persuasion that we have not mistaken the testimony of the Spirit of God; and in this way the two witnesses continue their joint testimony to the fact that we are the children of God, so long as we "love God and keep his commandments."

2. It is objected, that "*this doctrine involves the absurdity of a special revelation to every Christian, and leads to a superstitious reliance on impressions from our own imaginations.*"

To this we reply, that, so far as the *first* branch of the objection is concerned, it is not contended that the witness of the Spirit conveys to the mind any new truth not contained in the Scriptures; but merely

that a special and personal application is made, by the direct agency of the Spirit, of truths already clearly revealed in the Bible. The direct influence of the Spirit in conviction does not teach the sinner that any thing is sin which the Bible had not declared to be such, but it so quickens the powers of the soul as to cause the sinner to feel that he is a sinner—a fact of which he previously only had a speculative knowledge. Just so the witness of the Spirit possessed by the Christian, does not impart to him any original truth or doctrine, but merely causes him to feel that the promises of pardon to the penitent believer, and the great Bible truths of salvation through the merits of Christ, personally and individually apply to him. So that, in the proper sense, there is no new revelation contended for, in this view of the witness of the Spirit.

In reference to the *latter* branch of the objection, we reply, that it cannot be superstitious to rely on any doctrine revealed in Scripture; but if the Scripture doctrine of the witness of the Spirit is perverted by any so as to lead to a dependence on impressions resulting from their own imaginations, the perverters of the doctrine, and not the doctrine itself, are to be blamed. The direct witness of the Spirit we believe to be a doctrine plainly taught in Scripture; and though some, through the deceitfulness of sin, may pervert it to the worst of purposes, it can never, on that account, be surrendered, but will still be ardently maintained by the thousands of sincere and experimental Christians, who derive therefrom their highest enjoyments in this life, and their richest prelibations of the life to come.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXXV.

Question 1. How is adoption defined?

2. By what scriptures is the *witness* of the Spirit proved?

3. What is the first view given of this witness, and how is it refuted? The second, and how refuted?

4. What is the correct theory of this witness?

5. What is the distinction between the indirect witness of the Spirit, and the witness of our own spirit?

6. Does the indirect witness free us from doubt?

7. How is it shown that neither a consciousness of the fruits of the Spirit in general, nor of faith, can give a knowledge of our acceptance, at the time the Spirit is said to bear its witness?

CHAPTER XXXVI.

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

On this subject we cannot do better than give the following treatise by the Rev. John Wesley:

Many large volumes have been already published on this important subject. But the very length of them makes them hard to be understood, or even purchased, by common readers. A short, plain treatise on this head is what serious men have long desired, and what is here offered to those whom God has endowed with love and meekness of wisdom.

By *the saints*, I understand those who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself; those who are endued with the faith that purifies the heart—that produces a good conscience; those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible Church; those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches;" those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world; those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit; those who live by faith in the Son of God; those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant—those to whom all or any of these characters belong, I mean by the term *saints*.

Can any of these fall away? By *falling away*, we mean, not barely falling into sin. This, it is granted, they may. But can they fall totally? Can any of these so fall from God as to perish everlastingly?

I am sensible either side of this question is attended with great difficulties, such as reason alone could never remove. Therefore "to the law and to the testimony." Let the living oracles decide; and if these speak for us, we neither seek nor want farther witness.

On this authority, I believe a saint may fall away; that one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

I. For thus saith the Lord: "When the righteous turneth away from

his righteousness, and committeth iniquity; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." Ezek. xviii. 24.

That this is to be understood of eternal death, appears from the 26th verse: "When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; (here is temporal death;) for his iniquity that he hath done he shall die." (Here is death eternal.)

It appears farther from the whole scope of the chapter, which is to prove, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Verse 4. If you say, "The soul here means the body," I answer, that will die, whether you sin or no.

Again, thus saith the Lord: "When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, (yea, or to that promise as absolute and unconditional,) and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed he shall die for it." Ezek. xxxiii. 13.

Again: "When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby." Verse 18. Therefore one who is holy and righteous, in the judgment of God himself, may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

"But how is this consistent with what God declared elsewhere? 'If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, I will visit their offenses with the rod, and their sin with scourges. Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my truth to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. I have sworn once by my holiness, that I will not fail David.'" Ps. lxxxix. 30–35.

I answer, there is no manner of inconsistency between one declaration and the other. The prophet declares the just judgment of God against every righteous man who falls from his righteousness. The Psalmist declares the old loving kindnesses which God sware unto David in his truth: "I have found," saith he, "David, my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him. My hand shall hold him fast, and my arm shall strengthen him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven." Verses 20, 21, 29, it follows: "But if his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my truth to fail. My covenant will I not break. I will not fail David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me.' Verse 30, etc.

May not every man see that the covenant here spoken of relates wholly to David and his seed, or children? Where, then, is the inconsistency between the most absolute promise made to a particular family, and that solemn account which God has here given of his way of dealing with all mankind?

Besides, the very covenant mentioned in these words is not absolute, but conditional. The condition of repentance, in case of forsaking God's law, was implied, though not expressed; and so strongly implied that, this condition failing—not being performed—God did also fail David. He did "alter the thing that had gone out of his lips," and yet without any impeachment of his truth. He "abhorred and forsook his anointed," (verse 38,) the seed of David, whose throne, if they had repented, should have been "as the days of heaven." He did "break the covenant of his servant, and cast his crown to the ground." Verse 39. So vainly are these words of the Psalmist brought to contradict the plain, full testimony of the prophet!

Nor is there any contradiction between this testimony of God by Ezekiel, and those words which he spake by Jeremiah: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." For do these words assert that no righteous man ever turns from his righteousness? No such thing. They do not touch the question, but simply declare God's love to the Jewish Church. To see this in the clearest light, you need only read over the whole sentence: "At the same time, saith the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus saith the Lord, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I caused him to rest. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, (saith the prophet, speaking in the person of Israel,) saying, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel." Jer. xxxi. 1–4.

Suffer me here to observe, once for all, a fallacy which is constantly used by almost all writers on this point. They perpetually beg the question, by applying to particular persons assertions, or prophecies, which relate only to the Church in general; and some of them only to the Jewish Church and nation, as distinguished from all other people.

If you say, "But it was particularly revealed to me, that God had loved me with an everlasting love," I answer, suppose it was, (which might bear a dispute,) it proves no more, at the most, than that you, in particular, shall persevere; but does not effect the general question, whether others shall, or shall not.

II. One who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the inspired apostle: "War a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck." 1 Tim. i. 18, 19.

Observe, 1. These men (such as Hymeneus and Alexander) had once the faith that purifies the heart—that produces a good conscience, which they once had, or they could not have "put it away."

Observe, 2. They "made shipwreck" of the faith, which necessarily implies the total and final loss of it. For a vessel once wrecked can never be recovered. It is totally and finally lost.

And the apostle himself, in his Second Epistle to Timothy, mentions one of these two as irrecoverably lost. "Alexander (says he) did me much evil: the Lord shall reward him according to his works." 2 Tim. iv. 14. Therefore one who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

"But how can this be reconciled with the words of our Lord: 'He that believeth shall be saved'?"

Do you think these words mean, "He that believes" at this moment "shall" certainly and inevitably "be saved?" If this interpretation be good, then, by all the rules of speech, the other part of the sentence must mean, "He" that does "not believe" at this moment, "shall" certainly and inevitably "be damned." Therefore that interpretation cannot be good. The plain meaning, then, of the whole sentence is: "He that believeth (if he continue in faith) shall be saved; he that believeth not (if he continue in unbelief) shall be damned."

"But does not Christ say elsewhere, 'He that believeth hath everlasting life'? (John iii. 36;) and, 'He that believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life'?" Verse 24.

I answer, 1. The love of God is everlasting life. It is, in substance, the life of heaven. Now, every one that believes, loves God, and therefore "hath everlasting life." 2. Every one that believes "is" therefore "passed from death (spiritual death) unto life." 3. "Shall not come into condemnation," if he endureth in the faith unto the end: according to our Lord's own words, "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved;" and, "Verily I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." John viii. 51.

III. Those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual,

invisible Church, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly. For thus saith the apostle: "Some of the branches are broken off, and thou art grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree. Be not high-minded, but fear; if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of God! On them which fell, severity; but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou shalt be cut off." Rom. xi. 17, 20–22.

We may observe here—

1. The persons spoken to were actually grafted into the olive-tree.

2. This olive-tree is not barely the outward visible Church, but the invisible, consisting of holy believers. So the text: "If the first-fruit be holy, the lump is holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches." Verse 16. And, "Because of unbelief, they were broken off, and thou standest by faith."

3. These holy believers were still liable to be cut off from the invisible Church into which they were then grafted.

4. Here is not the least intimation of those who were so cut off being ever grafted in again. Therefore those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible Church, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

"But how does this agree with the 29th verse: 'The gifts and calling of God are without repentance'?"

The preceding verse shows: "As touching the election, (the unconditional election of the Jewish nation,) they are beloved for the fathers' sake"—for the sake of their forefathers. It follows (in proof of this, that "they are beloved for the fathers' sake,") that God has still blessings in store for the Jewish nation: "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance;" for God doth not repent of any blessings he hath given them, or any privileges he hath called them to. The words here referred to were originally spoken with a peculiar regard to these national blessings. "God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent." Num. xxiii. 19.

"But do not you hereby make God changeable? Whereas 'with him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.' James i. 17." By no means. God is unchangeably holy; therefore he always loveth "righteousness, and hateth iniquity." He is unchangeably good; therefore he pardoneth all that "repent, and believe the gospel." And he is unchangeably just; therefore he "rewardeth every man according to his works." But all this hinders not his resisting, when they are proud, those to whom he gave grace when they were humble. Nay, his un

changeableness itself requires that, if they grow high-minded, God should cut them off; that there should be a proportionable change in all the divine dispensations toward them.

"But how then is God faithful?" I answer, in fulfilling every promise which he hath made, to all to whom it is made, all who fulfill the condition of that promise. More particularly, 1. "God is faithful" in that "he will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able to bear." 1 Cor. x. 13. 2. "The Lord is faithful to establish and keep you from evil;" (if you put your trust in him;) from all the evil which you might otherwise suffer, through "unreasonable and wicked men." 2 Thess. iii. 2, 3. 3. "Quench not the Spirit; hold fast that which is good; abstain from all appearance of evil; and your whole spirit, soul, and body, shall be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thess. v. 19, etc. 4. Be not disobedient unto the heavenly calling; and "God is faithful, by whom ye were called, to confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. i. 8, 9. Yet, notwithstanding all this, unless you fulfill the condition, you cannot attain the promise.

"Nay, but are not 'all the promises, yea and amen'?" They are firm as the pillars of heaven. Perform the condition, and the promise is sure. Believe, and thou shalt be saved.

"But many promises are absolute and unconditional." In many, the condition is not expressed. But this does not prove there is none implied. No promises can be expressed in a more absolute form, than those above cited from the eighty-ninth Psalm. And yet we have seen a condition was implied even there, though none was expressed.

"But there is no condition, either expressed or implied, in those words of St. Paul: 'I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'" Rom. viii. 38, 39.

Suppose there is not, (which will bear dispute,) yet what will this prove? Just thus much—that the apostle was at that time fully persuaded of his own perseverance. And I doubt not but many believers at this day have the very same persuasion, termed in Scripture, "The full assurance of hope." But this does not prove that every believer all persevere, any more than that every believer is thus fully persuaded of his perseverance.

IV. Those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches," may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith our blessed Lord himself: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away. I am the vine, ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." John xv. 1–6.

Here we may observe, 1. The persons spoken of were in Christ—branches of the true vine. 2. Some of these branches abide not in Christ, but the Father taketh them away. 3. The branches which abide not are cast forth—cast out from Christ and his Church. 4. They are not only cast forth, but withered; consequently never grafted in again; nay, 5. They are not only cast forth and withered, but also cast into the fire; and, 6. They are burned. It is not possible for words more strongly to declare, that even those who are now branches in the true vine may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

By this clear, indisputable declaration of our Lord, we may interpret those which might be otherwise liable to dispute; wherein it is certain, whatever he meant besides, he did not mean to contradict himself. For example: "This is the Father's will, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." Most sure, all that God hath given him, or, as it is expressed in the next verse, "every one which believeth on him"—namely, to the end—he "will raise up at the last day," to reign with him forever.

Again: "I am the living bread; if any man eat of this bread, (by faith,) he shall live forever." John vi. 51. True—if he continue to eat thereof. And who can doubt of it?

Again: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." John x. 27–29.

In the preceding text, the condition is only implied; in this, it is plainly expressed. They are my sheep that hear my voice, that follow me in all holiness. And "if ye do those things, ye shall never fall." None shall "pluck you out of my hand."

Again: "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." John xiii. 1. "Having loved his own," (namely, the apostles, as the very next words, "which were in the world," evidently show,) "he loved them unto the end" of his life, and manifested that love to the last.

Once more: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one." John xvii. 11.

Great stress has been laid upon this text; and it has been hence inferred, that all those whom the Father had given him (a phrase frequently occurring in this chapter) must infallibly persevere to the end.

And yet, in the very next verse, our Lord himself declares that one of those whom the Father had given him did not persevere unto the end, but perished everlastingly. His own words are: "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition." John xvii. 12. So one even of these was finally lost!—a demonstration that the phrase, "those whom thou hast given me," signifies here, if not in most other places too, the twelve apostles, and them only.

On this occasion, I cannot but observe another common instance of begging the question—of taking for granted what ought to be proved: it is usually laid down as an indisputable truth, that whatever our Lord speaks to, or of, his apostles, is to be applied to all believers. But this cannot be allowed by any who impartially search the Scriptures. They cannot allow, without clear and particular proof, that any one of those texts which related primarily to the apostles, (as all men grant,) belong to any but them.

V. Those who so effectually know Christ as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the Apostle Peter: "If, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, (the only possible way of escaping them,) they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.

That the "knowledge of the way of righteousness" which they had attained, was an inward, experimental knowledge, is evident from that other expression, they had "escaped the pollutions of the world"—an expression parallel to that in the preceding chapter, verse 4, "having escaped the corruption which is in the world." And in both chapters, this effect is ascribed to the same cause—termed in the first, "the knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue;" in the second, more explicitly, "the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

And yet they lost that experimental knowledge of Christ, and the way of righteousness; they fell back into the same pollutions they had escaped, and were again "entangled therein and overcome." They

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"turned from the holy commandment delivered to them," so that their "latter end was worse than their beginning."

Therefore those who so effectually know Christ as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

And this is perfectly consistent with St. Peter's words, in the first chapter of his former Epistle: "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Undoubtedly so are all they who ever attain eternal salvation. It is the power of God only, and not our own, by which we are kept one day, or one hour.

VI. Those who "see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," and who have been "made partakers of the Holy Ghost," of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly. For thus saith the inspired writer to the Hebrews: "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Heb. vi. 4, 6.

Must not every unprejudiced person see the expressions here used are so strong and clear, that they cannot, without gross and palpable wresting, be understood of any but true believers?

They "were once enlightened" — an expression familiar with the apostle, and never by him applied to any but believers. So, "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward that believe." Eph. i. 17–19. So again: "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. iv. 6. This is a light which no unbelievers have. They are utter strangers to such enlightening. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them." Verse 4.

"They had tasted of the heavenly gift, (emphatically so called,) and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." So St. Peter likewise couples them together: "Be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," (Acts ii. 38,) whereby the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts, with all the other fruits of the Spirit. Yea, it is remarkable that our Lord himself, in his grand

commission to St Paul, (to which the apostle probably alludes in these words,) comprises all these three particulars: "I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, (here contracted into that one expression, "they were enlightened,") that they may receive forgiveness of sins, ("the heavenly gift,") and an inheritance among them which are sanctified;" (Acts xxvi. 18;) which are made "partakers of the Holy Ghost"—of all the sanctifying influences of the Spirit.

The expression, "They tasted of the heavenly gift," is taken from the Psalmist: "Taste and see that the Lord is good." Psalm xxxiv. 8. As if he had said, Be ye as assured of his love as of any thing you see with your eyes; and let the assurance thereof be sweet to your soul, as honey is to your tongue.

And yet those who had been thus "enlightened," had "tasted" this "gift," and been thus "partakers of the Holy Ghost," so "fell away" that it was "impossible to renew them again to repentance."

"But the apostle makes only a supposition: 'If they shall fall away.'"

I answer, the apostle makes no supposition at all. There is no *if* in the original. The words are, *Ἀδύνατον τοὺς ἅπαξ φωτισθέντας καὶ παραπεσόντας*—that is, in plain English, "It is impossible to renew again unto repentance those who were once enlightened and have fallen away;" therefore they must perish everlastingly.

"But if so, then farewell all my comfort."

Then your comfort depends on a poor foundation. My comfort stands not on any opinion, either that a believer can or cannot fall away, not on the remembrance of any thing wrought in me yesterday; but on what is to-day; on my present knowledge of God in Christ, reconciling me to himself; on my now beholding the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; walking in the light as he is in the light, and having fellowship with the Father and with the Son. My comfort is, that through grace I now believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that his Spirit doth bear witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. I take comfort in this, and this only, that I see Jesus at the right hand of God; that I personally for myself, and not for another, have a hope full of immortality; that I feel the love of God shed abroad in my heart, being crucified to the world, and the world crucified to me. My rejoicing is this, the testimony of my conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, I have my conversation in the world.

Go and find, if you can, a more solid joy, a more blissful comfort, on this side heaven. But this comfort is not shaken, be that opinion

true or false, whether the saints in general can or cannot fall. If you take up with any comfort short of this, you lean on the staff of a broken reed, which not only will not bear your weight, but will enter into your hand and pierce you.

VII. Those who live by faith may yet fall from God, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the same inspired writer: "The just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Heb. x. 38. "The just"—the justified persons—"shall live by faith," even now shall he live the life which is hid with Christ in God; and if he endure unto the end, he shall live with God forever. "But if any man draw back," saith the Lord, "my soul shall have no pleasure in him"—that is, I will utterly cast him off; and accordingly the drawing back here spoken of is termed, in the verse immediately following, "drawing back to perdition."

"But the person supposed to draw back is not the same with him that is said to live by faith."

I answer, 1. Who is it, then? Can any man draw back from faith who never came to it? But,

2. Had the text been fairly translated, there had been no pretense for this objection; for the original runs thus: Ὁ *δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται.* If ὁ *δίκαιος*, "the just man that lives by faith," (so the expression necessarily implies, there being no other nominative of the verb,) "draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

"But the apostle adds: 'We are not of them who draw back unto perdition.'" And what will you infer from thence? This is so far from contradicting what has been observed before, that it manifestly confirms it. It is a farther proof that there are those "who draw back unto perdition," although the apostle was not of that number. Therefore those who live by faith may yet fall from God, and perish everlastingly.

"But does not God say to every one that lives by faith, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee'?"

The whole sentence runs thus: "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." True—provided "your conversation be without covetousness," and ye "be content with such things as ye have." Then you may "boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Do you not see, 1. That this promise, as here recited, relates wholly to temporal things? 2. That, even thus taken, it is not absolute, but

conditional? 3. That the condition is expressly mentioned in the very same sentence?

VIII. Those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant may so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus again saith the apostle: "If we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indig nation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing?" Heb. x. 26–29.

It is undeniably plain, 1. That the person mentioned here was once sanctified by the blood of the covenant. 2. That he afterward, by known, willful sin, trod under foot the Son of God. 3. That he hereby incurred a sorer punishment than death, namely, death everlasting.

Therefore those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

"What! Can the blood of Christ burn in hell? Or can the purchase of the blood of Christ go thither?"

I answer, 1. The blood of Christ cannot burn in hell, no more than it can be spilled on the earth. The heavens must contain both his flesh and blood until the restitution of all things. But,

2. If the oracles of God are true, one who was purchased by the blood of Christ may go thither. For he that was sanctified by the blood of Christ was purchased by the blood of Christ. But one who was sanctified by the blood of Christ may nevertheless go to hell—may fall under that fiery indignation which shall forever devour the adversaries.

"Can a child of God, then, go to hell? Or can a man be a child of God to-day, and a child of the devil to-morrow? If God is our Father once, is he not our Father always?"

I answer, 1. A child of God—that is, a true believer—(for he that believeth is born of God,) while he continues a true believer, cannot go to hell. 2. If a believer make shipwreck of the faith, he is no longer a child of God; and then he may go to hell, yea, and certainly will, if he continues in unbelief. 3. If a believer may make shipwreck of the faith, then a man that believes now may be an unbeliever some time hence; yea, very possibly to-morrow; but if so, he who is a child of God to-day, may be a child of the devil to-morrow. For, 4. God is the Father of them that believe, so long as they believe; but the devil is the father of them that believe not, whether they did once believe or no.

The sum of all is this: If the Scriptures are true, those who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself; those who are endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience; those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible Church; those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches;" those who so effectually know Christ as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world; those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and of the fruits of the Spirit; those who live by faith in the Son of God; those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

Therefore let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXXVI.

QUESTION 1. What is understood by the term saints?
2. What is meant by falling away?
3. How is it proved that one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God may fall?
4. What objections to this are answered?
5. How is it shown that one endued with faith that purifies the heart may fall?
6. What objections are answered?
7. How is it shown that those who are grafted into the spiritual, invisible Church, may fall?
8. What objections are answered?
9. How is it proved that "branches of the true vine" may perish everlastingly?
10. Objections answered?
11. How is it proved that those who effectually know Christ may fall?
12. Objections answered?
13. How is it proved that those who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost may finally fall?
14. How is it proved that those who "live by faith" may fall and perish?
15. Objections answered?
16. How is it proved that those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant may fall and perish?
17. What objections are answered?
18. How is the whole matter summed up?

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

BENEATH that cloud of error and superstition which, during the dark ages, had settled upon the Christian Church, many of the vital doctrines of evangelical religion had become almost, or entirely, forgotten In the sixteenth century, Martin Luther was the honored instrument, in the divine hand, by whom the great Pauline doctrine of "justification by faith" was once more resuscitated, and held up before the Church in the clear light of gospel day.

Two centuries had scarcely elapsed since the development of the Lutheran Reformation, till the Protestant Churches were slumbering in the cold embrace of dead formality, while the muddy waters of infidelity, with a destructive influence, were sweeping over Protestant Christendom. Such was the state of religion in Europe about a hundred and thirty years ago, when God raised up John Wesley in England, not only to stem the torrent of infidelity throughout the United Kingdom, but to promote a revival of "Scripture holiness" in the Churches. As Luther, two centuries before, had stood forth as a mighty champion for "justification by faith," so Wesley now appeared, not only as the defender of that doctrine, but also as an instrument under God to revive and set clearly before the Church the apostolic doctrine of "Christian perfection." For his advocacy of this doctrine he was greatly persecuted and abused, as a setter forth of new and strange things. But he triumphantly maintained that the doctrine of Christian perfection was not only taught by Christ and his apostles, but was to be found in the standards of most of the Reformed Churches, especially in those of the Church of England.

What we here propose is, a brief view of the doctrine in question, as exhibited in Scripture. It is expressed in the new Testament by three different words—*holiness, sanctification*, and *perfection*. Hence we shall use as synonymous, in this connection, the phrases, perfected holiness, entire sanctification, and Christian perfection. In the investigation of this subject, we propose to consider—

1. The *import* of Christian perfection.

2. Its *Scripture proof.*
3. Its *attainment.*
4. Reply to some *objections.*

I. *What is implied in Christian perfection?*

1. We first define it *negatively.*

(1) It does not imply *absolute* perfection. This pertains to God alone, and is infinitely beyond the reach of all created beings. God is the grand center and source of all good and of all perfection. In this *absolute* sense, as "there is none *good* but one, that is God," so there is none *perfect* but one, that is God. Created beings and things can only be perfect in a *relative* sense—that is, according to their nature and after their kind. Men and angels may be approximating toward the perfections of God for all eternity, without the possibility of ever attaining unto them. God, in all his perfections, will still be infinitely beyond their reach.

(2) It does not imply *angelic* perfection. This belongs only to the angels who have "kept their first estate." They are styled "holy;" they "excel in strength;" and are "ministers" of God "that do his pleasure." "All their native faculties are unimpaired; their understanding, in particular, is still a lamp of light; their apprehension of all things clear and distinct; and their judgment always true. Hence, though their knowledge is limited, (for they are creatures,) though they are ignorant of innumerable things, yet they are not liable to mistake; their knowledge is perfect in its kind. And as their affections are all constantly guided by their unerring understanding, so that all their actions are suitable thereto, so they do every moment, not their own will, but the good and acceptable will of God." (Wesley.) Hence it is impossible for man—frail, infirm, and fallen man, whose "foundation is in the dust"—in his lapsed state, ever to reach angelic perfection.

(3) It does not imply *Adamic* perfection. Man was made only "a little lower than the angels," and doubtless possessed faculties of body and soul in a high degree of perfection; for God pronounced all his works of creation "very good." There was then no blemish or defect. Dwelling amid those peaceful bowers, the light of truth, undimmed by sin, poured upon his intellect. With him, all was innocence, purity, and love. Though, in the world of glory, sinners redeemed by the blood of Christ may, for aught we know, approach nearer the throne and rise higher in bliss than the angels, yet, in this mortal state, even Adamic perfection is far beyond their power of attainment.

(4) It does not imply perfection in *knowledge.* In this world the

intellect is deranged by sin, and clouded with ignorance. We can know, but "in part." And from defective understanding, improper words, tempers, and actions, must necessarily flow. We may have erroneous opinions as to the character and conduct of others; and, of course, our behavior toward them will be accordingly improper. Not only so, but this error in judgment may give a wrong bias to our affections: we may ove others less or more than they deserve. These infirmities and im perfections will ever cause us, in many instances, to fail in doing the "perfect will of God." Hence we are constantly dependent on the atonement of Christ; nor, without it, can we stand a moment justified before God.

(5) It does not *exempt us from temptation.* Our first parents, though "in the image of God," and dwelling amid the perfection of paradise, were tempted, and fell into sin. Our immaculate Redeemer also, though declaring, "I and my Father are one," "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. iv. 15. Hence it is clear that liability to temptation is consistent with the highest state of moral purity and perfection.

2. We now define Christian perfection affirmatively: what *does* it imply?

We may have difficulty in defining this doctrine to our satisfaction —we may differ in opinion as to what it implies; but to discard or denounce Christian perfection, is to take a position in direct and palpable antagonism to the Bible. That Christian perfection is taught in the New Testament, admits of no debate—the language of Christ and his apostles is direct and unequivocal. But the question is, *How* shall we understand it?

It is, indeed, singular that the term *perfection*, so plain and simple when applied to any other subject, should, even with many who call themselves Christians, become so offensive the moment it is connected with religion. As the sainted Fletcher once demanded—"Perfection! why should the harmless phrase offend us? Why should that lovely word frighten us?" We can speak of perfection in reference to mathematics, and all is right: we are readily understood. We speak of a *right* line, or a line *perfectly* straight; of a *perfect* triangle; a *perfect* square; a *perfect* circle; and in all this we offend no one—all comprehend our meaning *perfectly.* We speak of a *perfect* seed; a *perfect* bud; a *perfect* plant; a *perfect* tree; a *perfect* apple; a *perfect* egg; and in all such cases the meaning is clear and definite. Because a *seed* is perfect, no one expects it to exhibit the qualities of the plant or tree: because the *plant* or *tree* is perfect, no one looks to find in it the characteristics

of the bud; nor in the bud, the beauties or fragrance of the bloom; nor in the bloom, the excellent qualities of the ripe fruit.

Now, we ask, should we not be as rational when we speak of religion, as when we speak of nature? Is not the same *absolutely* perfect Being, who is the author of nature, also the author of religion? Did not He who perfumed the bud, who tinted the rose, and penciled the lily, also devise the more glorious system of Christianity? If He could stamp every particle of nature with a *perfection* suited to its kind, can He not endue "pure religion" with a degree of *perfection* worthy the character of its divine Author? Surely, if we will apply our reason in reference to religion, as we do in regard to other subjects, we need not be so staggered at the mention of Christian perfection. We proceed, then, to state that, in general terms, Christian perfection implies a full development of the principles and practice of Christianity in the hearts and lives of those who embrace it. It is a higher state of religious attainment than regeneration. It is regeneration grown to maturity. While one regenerated is a "babe," a sanctified Christian, in the full sense of that term, is a "father in Christ." Yet it should not be forgotten that sanctification, in its *initial* state, is synonymous with regeneration; while, in its *perfected* state, it is synonymous with Christian perfection. Thus, in the following passage, St. Paul speaks of all *justified* persons as also *sanctified*: "But ye are washed, but ye are *sanctified*, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." But in another place (1 Thess. v. 23) he prays for justified persons that God may *sanctify them wholly*—clearly implying that *entire sanctification* is an advanced, or matured, state in religious attainment, which it is the duty and privilege of all justified persons earnestly to seek by faith and prayer.

Mr. Fletcher says: "We give the name of 'Christian perfection' to that maturity of grace and holiness which established adult believers attain to under the Christian dispensation; and thus we distinguish that maturity of grace, both from the ripeness of *grace* which belongs to the dispensation of *the Jews below us*, and from the ripeness of *glory* which belongs to *departed saints above us*. Hence it appears that by 'Christian perfection' we mean nothing but the cluster and maturity of the graces which compose the Christian character in the Church militant. In other words, Christian perfection is a spiritual constellation, made up of these gracious stars: perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect self-denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity for our *visible* enemies, as well as for our earthly relations; and, above all, perfect love for our invisible God, through

the explicit knowledge of our Mediator, Jesus Christ. And as this last star is always accompanied by all the others, as Jupiter is by his satellites, we frequently use, as St. John, the phrase 'perfect love' instead of the word *perfection;* understanding by it the pure love of God shed abroad in the hearts of established believers by the Holy Ghost, which is abundantly given them under the fullness of the Christian dispensation."

But, to be more particular, Christian perfection implies—

(1) *Perfected holiness.* In an absolute sense, (as before stated,) holiness belongs to God alone. He is *holy* in a *high* and *absolute* sense, inapplicable to any creature. Holiness sometimes implies no more than consecration to a sacred use. In this acceptation, Jerusalem is styled "the *holy* city;" the temple, the "*holy* temple;" and its sacred vessels, "*holy* vessels." But there is yet another sense in which the term holy is used: it is applied *relatively* to angels and to saints, denoting *moral purity.* In this relative sense, Christians are required to be holy; and in this acceptation, we understand it as synonymous with Christian perfection.

(2) Christian perfection implies *entire sanctification.* The term sanctification is not always used in the same sense. It sometimes merely implies *consecration to a sacred use.* In this sense, "God blessed the seventh day, and *sanctified* it." Gen. ii. 3. In this sense also, the temple, the priests, the altar, the vessels, the sacrifices, etc., were *sanctified.* But the term sanctification sometimes implies the *purifying* or *cleansing* of sinners from the guilt, power, and pollution of sin, by the blood of Christ, and operation of the Holy Spirit. In this sense, all justified persons are also *sanctified;* and regeneration is sanctification begun. Indeed, regeneration and entire sanctification differ only in degree: they are the same in nature. Just as the dime is inferior to the dollar, though both of the same metal; so is regeneration inferior to entire sanctification, though both of the same nature. Sanctification, in the sense of entire consecration to God and a complete cleansing of the soul from "all unrighteousness," is synonymous with Christian perfection.

(3) Christian perfection implies *perfect love, and the maturity of all the graces of the Christian character.*

From what has been said, it will be perceived that perfected holiness, entire sanctification, and perfect love, are synonymous terms, all implying the same as Christian perfection; and that they denote a state of gracious attainment higher than is implied in regeneration and justification. But it yet remains that we bring this subject to the test of Scripture investigation.

II. How may the doctrine of Christian perfection be proved by Scripture?

1. By the *divine precepts.* "Walk before me, and be thou *perfect.*" Gen. xvii. 1. "Hear, O Israel: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Deut. vi. 5. "And now, Israel, what does the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with *all thy heart*, and with *all thy soul.*" Deut. x. 12. "Serve God with a *perfect heart* and a willing mind." 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. "Be ye therefore *perfect*, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. v. 48. "He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law; . . . therefore *love* is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. xiii. 8–10. "For the end of the commandment is *charity;* out of a *pure heart*, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." 1 Tim. i. 5. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all thy heart*, and with *all thy soul*, and with *all thy mind.* . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor *as thyself.* On these two commandments hang *all the law* and the prophets." Matt. xxii. 37–40.

Here Jehovah explicitly commands Abraham to be "*perfect.*" This demonstrates that, with him, perfection was attainable. God could not command an impossibility. And this perfection related to Abraham's future life, embracing his entire history from that hour to the end of his earthly course. "Walk before me," said God, "and be thou *perfect*"—that is, be *perfect* in thy *walk*—thy entire character and life.

None can read the foregoing scriptures without seeing that *loving God with all our ability* is an express command of both Testaments — of Moses and the prophets; of Christ and the apostles. Now, as this love to God and our neighbor comprises the whole law of God, and as it is solemnly and explicitly enjoined, it follows, first, that it is a duty *possible* for all to comply with; secondly, that in complying with this broad requirement, they fulfill their *whole duty*, and, of course, attain unto that high religious state implied in perfected holiness, entire sanctification, or Christian perfection.

2. This doctrine is proved by *the divine promises.*

"The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Deut. xxx. 6. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. i. 18. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols,

will I cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezek. xxxvi. 25–27. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life." Luke i. 68–75. "If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him." John xiv. 23. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to *cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" 1 John i. 9.

In these promises, the Christian is abundantly assured of all the gracious assistance necessary to enable him to obey the divine precepts. Indeed, were these promises not thus expressly given, the fact that the command is given, were enough. Each command of God implies the promise of grace to obey it. God here promises so to "circumcise," or change, the heart, that the great command of perfect love shall be complied with. He promises that, under the gospel dispensation, believers shall be "cleansed from *all their filthiness*, and *from all their idols.*"

Again, Zacharias prophesied that, under the reign of Christ, his followers would be enabled to "serve him without (tormenting) fear, in *holiness* and *righteousness* before him, *all the days of their life.*" Surely, here is the promise of *perfected holiness*, entire sanctification, and Christian perfection!

And how full are the promises of Jesus! To every one that loves him, he and his "Father will come," and they will make their "abode with him;" thus filling his heart with the fullness of his presence and grace.

Again: we are not only promised that "if we confess our sins" they shall be forgiven, but we shall be "*cleansed from all unrighteousness.*" Is not this complete deliverance? Can it imply less than entire sanctification—than perfected holiness—than Christian perfection?

3. The *prayers of Scripture* prove this doctrine.

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made *perfect* in one." John xvii. 21–23. "God dwelleth in us, and his love is *perfected* in us." 1 John iv. 12. "And the very

God of peace *sanctify you wholly;* and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved *blameless* unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thess. v. 23, 24. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. li. 10. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God." Eph. iii. 14–19.

In reference to our Saviour's prayer, we ask, Can this prayer be answered, and Christians not be entirely sanctified—perfected in holiness and in love? St. John says God's "love is perfected in us." Now, if the blessing of "perfect love" be not the privilege of Christians under the gospel, what sensible construction can be put upon this text? Look also at the prayers of David and St. Paul—a "clean heart," to be sanctified "wholly," and to be "filled with all the fullness of God," are the objects for which they pray. Did they pray according to the will of God? Are we authorized to assume that they prayed for impossibilities, and thus, under the divine influence, offered up solemn petitions for things which it was absolutely impossible—contrary to God's will—that they should obtain? Shall we assume that this solemn mockery was dictated by God's Spirit? As if designedly to silence this impious cavil, St. Paul adds to his petition these words of assurance: "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also *will do it.*"

Hence we conclude that if Christ and his holy prophets and apostles have not set the example of absurdly praying for blessings, contrary to God's will, knowing that it was impossible for their prayers to be answered, then the blessing of perfected holiness, entire sanctification, or Christian perfection, is the birthright of every Christian who will seek it with his whole heart.

4. The *exhortations of Scripture* prove this doctrine: "Let us go on unto *perfection.*" Heb. vi. 1.

"Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, *perfecting holiness* in the fear of God." 2 Cor. vii. 1. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom.

xii. 1. "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be *perfect* and *entire, wanting nothing.*" James i. 4.

Here St. Paul exhorts Christians to "go on unto perfection;" to "cleanse" themselves from "all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God;" and St. James exhorts his brethren to aim at the attainment of a state in grace so exalted that they shall be "*perfect* and *entire, wanting nothing.*" Did they exhort them to aim at impossibilities? Did they mock their brethren, by knowingly exciting in them vain, delusive hopes? Or were these inspired apostles ignorant on the subject of which they wrote? Either they were themselves deluded, they willfully deluded their brethren, or the blessing of perfected holiness, entire sanctification, or Christian perfection, is attainable under the gospel.

5. The *examples recorded in Scripture of persons having attained Christian perfection,* may be adduced as proof of the doctrine.

"By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." Heb. xi. 5. It is recorded that Job "was *perfect* and *upright,* and one that feared God and eschewed evil." Job i. 1. It is said also that Zacharias and Elizabeth "were both *righteous* before God, walking in *all the commandments and ordinances* of the Lord *blameless.*" Luke i. 6. Of Nathanael our Saviour exclaimed: "Behold an *Israelite indeed,* in whom is *no guile!*" John i. 47. St. Paul says: "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are *perfect.*" 1 Cor. ii. 6. "Let us therefore, as many as be *perfect,* be thus minded." Phil. iii. 15.

Enoch, "before his translation"—that is, while living in the world—"had this testimony, that *he pleased God.*" Not that he pleased God in *some things;* that were faint praise; but that "he pleased God"—without qualification—no exception is intimated; and we are not authorized to suppose any. And as a seal and reward of his upright and blameless character and conduct, he "was translated that he should not see death."

If our Saviour pronounced Nathanael "an Israelite *indeed,* in whom is *no guile,*" who shall lay any thing to the charge of that elect saint? But St. Paul speaks of *living* Christians who were "perfect." Either, then, this inspired apostle was deceived as to the character of the persons to whom he referred, or he taught the doctrine of Christian perfection.

III. The *attainment* of Christian perfection.

1. *When* may this great blessing be attained? On this question

there has been much dispute among Christians. Many have contended that Christian perfection is not attainable till the hour of death; others, while denying that it is the general privilege of Christians in this life, have admitted that it may be the privilege of a favored few, to whom God, for special reasons, may see fit to grant peculiar favors; but even in such cases they consider it impossible for this blessing to be retained, except for a short period.

Some of the insuperable objections to this last theory are the following:

1. It is entirely unsupported by Scripture.

That this high state of grace is intended only for a favored class of Christians, is nowhere intimated in God's word. Surely no Christian should feel at liberty to patronize a religious theory thus destitute of any Scripture basis!

2. This theory is contrary to the general tenor of Scripture on the subject. As we have already shown, the precepts, the promises, the exhortations, and the prayers, relating to this high state of religious attainment, are without restriction. The command to "love God with all the heart," and to "love our neighbor as ourselves," and to "be *perfect*, as our Father who is in heaven is perfect;" the promise, "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you," and "he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;" the exhortation, "Let us go on unto perfection," and "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God;" and the prayer, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly," and, "that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God" — all these commands, promises, exhortations, and prayers are general, and unrestricted to classes of Christians, in their character and application. They pertain alike to the Jew and to the Gentile, to the high and to the low; to all classes and to all orders. Indeed, in this respect, the "ways of God are equal." Such are the principles on which the gospel system of salvation is conducted, that the highest state of religious experience is within the reach of "the least of all saints."

But is this state in religious attainment possible in this life? Should we seek it, aim at it, pray for it, and expect it, in this life; or must we consider it impossible for us to attain to it, till the hour of death? Here is an important practical question, which demands a careful consideration.

That Christian perfection, entire sanctification, or perfected holiness, (whichever of these terms we choose to use,) is attainable in this life,

whenever we comply with the conditions prescribed in the gospel, we firmly believe, for the following reasons:

1. This doctrine harmonizes with the great principle on which God's moral government over mankind, as exhibited in the gospel, is conducted. Everywhere man is treated as a moral agent. Good and evil, life and death, are set before him; and he is commanded to reject evil and death, and to choose good and life. Where is it intimated that, in this requirement, there is any restriction? that he only has ability, through grace, to reject the evil and to choose the good, to a *partial* extent? that when he has advanced to a certain stage in this process, the wheels of his chariot are so locked that he can progress no farther? Has his free agency been destroyed because he has become a child of God? While in the guilt of sin, was he free, through grace, to repent, believe, and be converted; but now that he is a justified child of God, has he lost his free agency; or has the grace of God been so far withdrawn from him, that he cannot go on from one degree of faith, and zeal, and love, and holiness, to another, till he shall appear *perfect* before God, exhibiting in their *fullness*, *maturity*, and *perfection*, all the graces of the Christian character?

Unless God has made a radical change, either in the character of man, or in his government over him, if we were free before conversion to reject evil and choose good, we cannot be less so after conversion. If, through grace, we forsake *one* sin, we *may* forsake *all* sin. If we may be cleansed from *one sin*, we may be cleansed from *all sin*. If we may keep *one* commandment, we *may*, through grace, "keep the whole law"—that is, the law of faith and love, under which we are placed under the gospel. Again: if it is impossible for us to avoid sinning, how can we be held responsible for that which is unavoidable? If we may advance to one degree of holiness or sanctification, which we attain when we are justified, why may we not, on the same principle, "go on unto perfection"?

It is a maxim of the gospel, as clear as the sun, that there is no excuse for sin. Even the heathens, amid their idolatry, are "without excuse." If justified persons are unable to attain "perfected holiness" in this life, what but sin can prevent it? and if that sin is unavoidable, what better apology for sin can be imagined? No just law, human or divine, can punish an intelligent agent for an unavoidable act. If continuing in sin, "that grace may abound," after conversion, is a necessity from which we cannot escape, then, for that sin, we cannot be punished. Yea, more, the very position involves an absurdity. Sin, to be personal and actual, so as to deserve punishment, must be avoidable. Hence we

conclude, that unless the moral agency of man, or God's government over him, is radically changed when we are justified, we *may*, from that hour, "go on unto perfection;" and whenever we comply with the conditions prescribed in the gospel — that is, whenever we exercise the requisite degree of faith, be it one day or ten years after our conversion —*that moment* God will "*cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*"

2. That Christian perfection is attainable in this life, at any period, we believe, because the contrary hypothesis is inconsistent with those commands, promises, exhortations, and prayers, connected with the doctrine in question.

All the commands, promises, exhortations, and prayers, recorded in Scripture, except where the context explicitly shows to the contrary, are in the present tense—they are intended to take effect from the moment of their delivery. If God says, "Be ye holy," he does not mean when we die, or next year; nay, nor to-morrow: he means *now*—"*to day*, if ye will hear his voice"—"*now* is the accepted time; behold! *now* is the day of salvation." *Now* is emphatically God's time. Any one may perceive that the Scriptures referred to cannot, without the utmost violence, be construed as not applying to the *present* time. When our Saviour said, "Be ye, therefore, perfect," how absurd to suppose he merely intended to teach the necessity of perfection at death! It would be no worse to contend that when he said, "Seek, and ye shall find; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened," he only designed to instruct his disciples in reference to their duty in the hour of death.

Equally absurd would it be, without authority, to construe the promises, entreaties, or prayers, in the same way. When our Lord promised, saying, "Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and *I will give you rest*," who ever dreamed that he was merely promising rest at death? When St. James (i. 4) exhorted his brethren, saying, "Let patience have her *perfect work*, that ye may be *perfect and entire, wanting nothing*," how preposterous the supposition, that he was merely encouraging them in reference to their death-bed duties! When David prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God," was he looking forward to the hour of death for an answer to his petition? How absurd the hypothesis! Even so, to construe all these commands, promises, exhortations, and prayers, referring to the blessing of perfect holiness, perfect love, or Christian perfection, as not contemplating any realization this side the hour of dissolution, would be the climax of absurdity.

3. Our next reason for believing that Christian perfection is attainable in this life, is founded on *the explicit declarations of Scripture.*

(1) The Scriptures connect with the attainment of this blessing, the performance of subsequent duties which can only pertain to the conduct through life—entirely inapplicable to the hour of death.

St. Paul, speaking of the *destruction of the body of sin*, adds, "that *henceforth* we should not serve sin"—that is, *through all subsequent life*, extending from the hour in which this great triumph over sin is gained, to the hour of death. In a passage already quoted, (1 Thess. v. 23,) the apostle, after having prayed for his brethren that they might be sanctified "wholly," prays farther, that they may "be preserved *blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

(2) Again: the fruits of the Spirit, which, all must admit, Christians are required to exhibit in their maturity and perfection, are, in their nature, such that they can be thus produced only in life. These fruits are thus enumerated: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. v. 22, 23. No sober-minded Christian can suppose that it is intended that this constellation of Christian graces shall shine forth in its maturity only in death. But if we are to exhibit these fruits in life, then, of necessity, to the same extent must we be exempt from the opposite evils. And if Christianity does not require us to bring forth these fruits to perfection during life, then it will follow that we are not required to be delivered from the opposite evils. Thus, if we are not required to be perfect in love, we may indulge in sinful anger; if we are not required to be perfect in temperance, then we may indulge in intemperance—and so of the rest.

That these fruits of the Spirit are required to be exhibited, not *partially*, but in their perfection, in the lives of Christians, cannot be controverted, without the utmost violence to the Scriptures. And if so, then Christian perfection, which implies these fruits in their maturity, is attainable in this life.

(3) If Christian perfection be not attainable till death, then it must follow, either that *death*, "the last *enemy* that shall be destroyed," is the efficient agent in the work, or that the blood of Christ, and the influence of the Holy Spirit, are more efficacious in death than they can be in life—both of which positions are too unscriptural to be entertained.

(4) The Scriptures explicitly teach, in so many words, that this blessing is attainable in this life. St. John declares: "Herein is our *love made perfect*, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because *as he* (Christ) *is, so are we, in this world.*" 1 John iv. 17. In this passage, the apostle, as though he had foreseen that some would

oppose this doctrine, has furnished us as direct an answer to the objection now before us, as language can express. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his *love is perfected in us.*" 1 John iv. 12. The apostle was evidently here speaking of *living* Christians, including himself in the number, and not of such only as were on the bed of death. "And every man that hath this hope in him, *purifieth* himself, even *as he* (Christ) *is pure.*" 1 John iii. 3. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John i. 7. This entire cleansing from sin is not promised at death, but evidently takes place *now*—while "we walk in the light." "Follow peace with all men, and *holiness*, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14. The *holiness* here spoken of can only mean "perfected holiness;" and this is to be *followed*, not at death, but *now*, while mingling with the affairs of this life.

Such, according to God's word, are the glorious privileges of all the children of God, even in this world. They not only "know God" in the remission of "past sins," but following "on to know the Lord," they may "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," and "be filled with all the fullness of God." It matters but little whether this eminent state of holiness be gained by a bold, energetic, and determined exercise of faith and prayer, or by a more gradual process—whether it be *instantaneous* or *gradual*, or both the one and the other. The great matter is, with each and all of us, that we lose no time, but arise at once, and "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

IV. Objections answered.

1. It is objected that entire sanctification is impossible in this life, because of *the union of the soul with the body.*

It is assumed that the body is so depraved by sin, that so long as the soul remains in the body, sin must remain in the soul.

We ask, Where is the Scripture proof of this position? Several texts are relied on for this purpose; but it can easily be shown that, unless perverted, they furnish not the slightest support to the position in question. The language of St. Paul to the Romans is quoted: "For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not; . . . but what I hate, that do I. . . . For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." Rom. vii. 14–23. Again: "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not

subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Rom. viii. 7, 8.

The argument against Christian perfection, deduced from these scriptures, is this: "That the apostle, in this place, is describing his own condition as one "sold under sin," even while he is the converted apostle; and as *he*, converted apostle as he was, could not escape the dominion of sin, because he was still in the flesh, so neither can any others, so long as they remain in the body."

Now we venture to affirm that this is a gross perversion of the scripture in question. The apostle, in the seventh chapter to the Romans, is *not* describing his own state, as the converted apostle, but he is personating the *convicted sinner*, seeking in vain for *deliverance from sin under the bondage of the law.* It is only necessary for us carefully to read the sixth and eighth chapters of Romans, in connection with the seventh, and the truth of this remark will be seen. In the sixth chapter, the justified believer is "*freed from sin*"—"his old man" (sinful nature) is crucified with him, (Christ,) that *the body of sin might be destroyed*, that henceforth he should *not serve sin*—he is "made *free from sin*," and has his "fruit *unto holiness.*" Could the apostle so flatly contradict himself, as in the next chapter to represent the same character as "*sold under sin*," and in "*captivity to the law of sin*"? The hypothesis is inadmissible.

Another error in this argument against perfection is, that the term "flesh" in the phrase, "They that are in the *flesh* cannot please God," means *the body.* It certainly cannot mean *the body;* for then no *living man* could ever please God. It means the *sinful, depraved nature*—the "carnal mind"—the "old man"—that must be "put off," or "crucified with Christ," before we can "walk in newness of life."

2. It is objected against Christian perfection, that "the attainment of it in this life *would render the atonement of Christ no longer necessary.*" Surely not. Whatever be our state in grace, we are dependent on Christ, from moment to moment, for all we have and are. And in proportion as we cease to exercise, or cast off, that faith in the merits of Christ by which the blessing in question has been received, at the same time, and to the same extent, will that blessing be withheld; so that the most advanced Christian may ever exclaim—

> "Every moment, Lord, I want
> The merit of thy death!"

3. It is objected, that "*this doctrine of Christian perfection destroys the possibility of any farther advancement in religion.*"

Certainly it does not. Adam in paradise may have been as perfect in his character as the purest and most exalted angel, yet he was probably far below the holy angels in capacity, whether for loving God, or enjoying happiness. In nature, perfection in any particular department does not close the door against all farther advancement; then why should it in religion? A perfect *seed* may advance, first, to a perfect *blade*, then to a perfect *ear*, and then to perfect *corn* in the ear. Just so the Christian, though "perfected in love"—loving God with all his capacity—may still continue to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" and while his capacity thus enlarges, while his knowledge increases, and his spiritual powers expand, he may still be advancing in grace, sinking deeper, and still deeper, in the depths of infinite holiness and love; and rising higher, and still higher, in the heights of ineffable joy and felicity.

Indeed, we have no authority to fix any limit to the advancement of redeemed and sanctified spirits, either in this world or the next. It is their duty and privilege ever to be advancing, not only to "perfect holiness in the fear of God," but ever after to be reaching forth unto still more exalted degrees of perfection in holiness, and knowledge, and love, and bliss, till, released from the tenement of clay, and entered upon the glories of immortality, they shall, to all eternity, be approximating nearer, and still nearer, to the source and fountain of infinite perfection, and bliss, and glory.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXXVII.

QUESTION 1. What *three different words* are used in the New Testament for Christian perfection?

2. How is this doctrine defined *negatively?*

3. How is it defined *affirmatively*, in general terms?

4. How is it *more particularly* defined?

5. How is the doctrine proved from the *precepts* of Scripture? From the *promises?* From the *prayers?* From the *exhortations?* From the *examples?*

6. What two erroneous views are stated concerning the *time* when this blessing may be attained, and how are they refuted?

7. What three reasons are given for believing that Christian perfection is *attainable in this life?*

8. What is the first objection to the doctrine named, and how is it answered?

9. What is the second objection, and how is it answered?

10. What is the last objection, and how is it answered?

PART I.—DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK V.—THE FUTURE STATE.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IMMORTALITY OF THE HUMAN SOUL — PHILOSOPHICAL OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

Are we, as conscious beings, to survive the ravages of death? And if so, what will be the character of our future destiny? These are questions of the greatest importance, and the deepest interest. They lie at the foundation of all religion, and have engaged the most serious and earnest inquiry of the wisest and best of mankind in every age. A firm belief in the doctrines of a hereafter inspires the mind with a deep sense of the importance and dignity of our nature, and is the most powerful incentive to the practice of moral and religious duty.

For the establishment of this doctrine, the main reliance of the Christian is on the teachings of inspiration. We propose, however, in our investigation, to pursue the following order: first, to remove some *objections;* secondly, to consider some *presumptive proofs*, derived from the light of nature; thirdly, to exhibit the *positive evidence of Scripture.*

The principal *objections* to the scriptural doctrine of the soul's immortality have been founded upon that skeptical principle of philosophy, termed *materialism.*

This peculiar phase of skepticism, with slight diversity of sentiment in reference to unimportant points, has had its advocates in almost every age, commencing anterior to the origin of Christianity.

Among the ancient Jews, the skeptical notions of the Sadducees were but a development of the theory of materialism. The same pernicious error, as early as the third century, had infested the Christian Church,

as appears from its refutation in the writings of Origen. And although the system has never been countenanced by the great body of the Church, but viewed as an insidious and pernicious type of infidelity, yet up to the present time it has its advocates among some professing the Christian name.

The materialism of the present day is substantially identical with the theory of infidel philosophers of all the past ages, and of all countries, whether Jewish, Pagan, Mohammedan, or Christian. It was advocated by Epicurus, Lucretius, and others of the atheistic school; and in more modern times, it has been zealously espoused by Spinoza, Hobbes, Hume, Volney, Voltaire, and the mass of infidel writers.

1. The theory of materialism, in whatever *minutiæ* its patrons may differ, is substantially this: it teaches that man is not a compound being, consisting of two distinct parts—*soul*, or *mind*, which is *immortal*, and *body*, which is *material;* but that he is *wholly material*—the soul, or mind, being nothing but organized matter, a mere function of the brain; and that consequently, at the dissolution of the body, the mind, or soul, must cease to exist.

That this whole theory is flatly contradictory to Scripture, we will show, in its proper place. At present, we examine it in the light of philosophy.

From our own consciousness, we learn that man is not only possessed of a body, or material part, but of a soul, or immaterial part. We derive our knowledge of material things through the medium of sensation, and of immaterial things through the medium of consciousness. Of the essence of matter and of mind we are alike ignorant. All we know of them is what we learn of their properties through the mediums just named. By the exercise of external sensation, we know that we have bodies, or a substantive, material nature, possessing certain properties, such as impenetrability, extension, divisibility, figure, inertia, attraction, and indestructibility. Of the existence of these properties the constitution of our nature will not allow us to doubt, for the evidence is direct through our own senses. Thus, by the senses of sight and touch, we know that we have a material nature, susceptible of division, and possessing a certain figure; we know that wherever there is division or figure, there must be something divided or figured. However ignorant, therefore, we may be of the essence of that substance, we cannot doubt its existence.

By an analogous process, we arrive at a knowledge of the existence of our *souls*, or the immaterial part of our nature. What sensation is to the body, consciousness is to the soul. By an exercise of conscious-

ness, we know that we are possessed of souls, or an immaterial nature, endued with certain properties, or faculties, such as understanding, memory, power of volition, self-determination, self-action, and the affections. Of the existence of these faculties, the constitution of our nature will not allow us to doubt; for the evidence is direct through our own consciousness. Thus we reason, remember, choose, love, etc., and therefore know there must be something which reasons, remembers, chooses, loves, etc. However ignorant we may be of the essence of that substance, we cannot doubt its existence. *That* substance, a knowledge of which is thus gained, is what we mean by the *soul.* Thus we think it clear that to doubt the existence of the soul is as unphilosophical as to doubt the existence of the body. To doubt, in either case, is to yield ourselves up to the absurdities of universal skepticism, and assume an attitude of hostility to both revelation and common sense.

The materialist may be ready enough to admit the existence of the soul, as well as that of the body, provided only we allow his position that they are not two distinct things, but are both of the same material substance. Here is the point of controversy. Materialism, while admitting the existence of the soul, avers that it is not distinct from the body in its substance, but is nothing but matter in a peculiar state of organization.

Here, we undertake to say, is the grand blunder of materialism: it plants itself on the unphilosophical assumption, that two things—matter and mind—having no single property in common, are essentially the same. Whereas not the first property of matter can belong to mind, nor can the first property of mind belong to matter.

Impenetrability is a property of matter. By this we mean that such is the essential nature of every material substance, that it excludes all other matter from the space it occupies. Can this be also a property of mind? Unless it is, mind cannot be material. Take any given vessel and fill it with water, and the same vessel cannot, at the same time, be filled with wine. The water must be displaced before the vessel can receive the wine. Why is this the case? Simply because water and wine are both material substances, and impenetrability is a property of all matter. Now, if mind be not possessed of the same essential property, unless the plainest principle of natural philosophy be renounced, it cannot be a material substance. The attempt to conceive of mind as being restricted to a limited space, and so filling that space that nothing else can occupy it at the same time, shocks all common sense.

It is easy to conceive of any material substance so filling a given

space as to exclude every thing else; but to conceive of mind as being subject to a similar law, is a task beyond our powers.

Extension is a property of matter. Does it pertain to mind? Matter has length, breadth, and thickness, and may be measured or weighed; but what meaning shall we attach to the phrase, a *pound* of mind—a *square yard* of mind—*ten miles* of mind? Indeed, it seems to us that no man can worship at the shrine of materialism, without renouncing common sense.

Figure is a property of matter. Is mind of a certain figure? Is it a circle, a square, a triangle, or a parallelogram?

Divisibility is a property of matter. But is it also a property of mind? Can you take a square foot of mind, and divide it into a thousand distinct parts, each constituting a distinct and separate mental lump, having all the essential properties of the original square foot?

Inertia is a property of matter. Mere lifeless matter can only move as acted upon by extrinsic physical force. And for one material substance to act upon another, they must be in contact. Can this law pertain to mind? Paul, though absent in body from his brethren, was present in spirit. What material force impelled his mind to leap the bounds of space in a moment, and mingle with his brethren at a distance? If our own senses teach us that certain properties pertain to matter, does not our own consciousness teach us, with equal certainty, that *those* properties do not belong to mind?

But let us look at the properties and faculties of mind, and see if they can be predicated of matter. Can matter think, reason, compare, and judge? Has it understanding? In all the researches of philosophy, where has a particle, or any portion, however great or small, of mere matter, given evidence to a common-sense observer that it was capable of thought, of reason, or of intellection, in any shape or form? In all the experiments of chemistry, and the inventions and operations of mechanics, where has been exhibited any combination, arrangement, adjustment, or juxtaposition of the particles of matter, making the least approximation toward the creation of a conscious thinking machine?

If our common sense teaches us that matter is possessed of properties that do not pertain to mind, and that mind is possessed of properties that do not inhere in matter, does not the same common sense teach us, with equal certainty, that matter is not mind, and that mind is not matter?

Now, we appeal to every man's own consciousness, as evidence that he possesses a power capable of thought, reason, memory, choice, will,

love, hatred, joy, and grief; and that this power is not a faculty of his material nature. Every one knows he does not think with his foot, nor reason with his hand, nor grieve with his muscles. I may will to move my hand or my foot, but at the same time I am sure I do not will *with* either.

Admit that the reasoning power resides in, or is connected with, the brain; that will not prove that the brain is that power. We may be conscious that the thinking process is carried on within the head, but farther than this consciousness cannot go. We are no more conscious that the brain thinks and wills, than that these operations are performed by the bones, the muscles, or the blood. The soul is unquestionably, in a way to us inscrutable, united with the body; and the brain is probably, not only the point of union, but the organ through which the process of intellection is conducted; but being matter, and nothing but matter, it is not the intelligent agent that works the machine. The brain can no more think or will of itself, than the locomotive can move the train without the steam.

That the brain is mere matter, all admit; but is matter possessed of intelligence? This is the point in dispute. That intelligence is not an essential property of matter; that it does not pertain to matter as such, has been proved. If it be said that intelligence is the result of the organization of matter, we reply, that no arrangement or combination can add to any substance whatever essential qualities not inherent in it. Take from matter any one of its essential qualities, and it instantly ceases to be matter, and has become something else. In the same way, add any thing to matter which is not essential to it as matter, and whatever that added something be, it cannot be matter; for if you add the same to the same, it still can be nothing but the same. The same essential properties may be piled upon each other to any extent we please, but we cannot thereby add to the number of essential properties. Thus, we may take a lump of matter of any supposed dimensions, and divide it into ten thousand pieces, and each one of those particles will retain all the essential properties of the original lump; no more, and no less. Or if you take the same original lump of matter, and instead of dividing it, add to it ten thousand lumps of the same kind, and, however you may combine them, they can only possess the same essential properties which each lump possessed in itself before they were combined.

Among the millions of the modifications and combinations of material substances which have been effected by the skill, ingenuity, art, or labor of man, or which the world has ever witnessed, from the birth of creation to the present hour, no particle of matter, whether great or small

whether simple or compound, whether rude and misshapen, or refined and polished, has ever been known, which did not possess the same essential properties—no more, and no less—with every other particle of matter in the universe. If, therefore, any thing has been added to matter by which a property not essential to matter has resulted, that added something could not have been material. To suppose the introduction of a new essential property, without the addition of an essentially different substance, is thus seen to be contrary to the established principles of the philosophy of nature. If thought, reason, or intelligence, be not an essential property of matter, it cannot be made such. To suppose it had become such, would imply, either that matter, destitute of thought, reason, or intelligence, is not matter, or that matter, endued with thought, reason, or intelligence, is more than matter: either of which would be fatal to materialism. Hence, as thought, reason, and intelligence, are essential properties of the human soul, but are not essential properties of matter, it necessarily follows that the soul cannot be a material substance.

But let us look still farther at the properties of mind, and see if common sense can allow that they pertain to mere organized matter.

How wonderful is the faculty of memory! What a vast store-house of knowledge may be treasured up by that power! If mind be a material substance, it must be a folded volume of almost an infinite number of leaves, to furnish a sufficient surface for so immense a record. And look, too, at the dimensions of those leaves. The flaming bounds of the universe cannot limit the flight of human thought, and yet upon the tablet of memory is recorded the speculations of the mind, and the flights of the imagination, throughout this immense range. Can so immeasurable a material fabric be inclosed within a human skull?

And yet, stranger still, the mind knows how to call up these reminiscences at pleasure. What material hand lies concealed within the brain that can discern the proper time to touch the cord, to turn the key, or to sound the note that will summon up at the pleasure of the mind the slumbering remembrances of the past? Admit that the mind itself is an immaterial, intelligent, and self-active agent, and all is plain. This spiritual essence can sit upon its throne, and work the wonderful brain-machinery, guided by its own inherent and self-active powers. But deny this, and assume that all is matter, and nothing but matter, and we are overwhelmed with difficulty, mystery, and absurdity.

One of the most serious objections to materialism is, that it leads

directly to atheism. Atheists have always defended their position on the ground of materialism; and materialists, to be consistent with themselves, must become atheists.

The atheist argues against the existence of a personal, spiritual God, possessed of infinite intelligence and power, who created and upholds all things, by assuming that matter is eternal, and that it is possessed of all the intelligence and power requisite for its own government. Now, is it not clear that materialism occupies one important plank on the same platform? For, if a being endued with all the intelligence of man—with all his mental activity; his capacity of thought and reason; his ability to soa. to the heavens above, and hold converse with the worlds and systems of worlds which roll amid the immensity of space; to measure their distances and trace their orbits; and then, descending to earth, to dive into the profound arcana of nature, and unfold her secret mysteries—if a being of such astonishing powers as these is nothing but an organized lump of matter, as the materialist asserts, how naturally and consistently may he take another step, and conclude that there may reside somewhere amid the immensity of space another body of organized matter of finer mold and texture, and more ingenious structure, that may control all things! How easily may he suppose an organism of mere matter, thrown together by chance or somehow else, as much superior to Newton as he was to the mere zoophyte! And if once we admit the possibility that mere matter may produce such an intelligence, how easy the transition to all the startling conclusions of atheism!

We might greatly enlarge upon the theme before us, but we deem it unnecessary. We have said enough to satisfy any candid person, who is willing to be governed by common sense, that the human mind, or soul, is not a material substance, and that, therefore, it will not necessarily perish with the dissolution of the body. We do not, however, infer the immortality of the soul merely from its immateriality. Whether it be immortal or not, depends on the will of the Creator, and not on its properties or phenomena.

2. We next consider the objection to the scriptural doctrine of man's proper immortality, growing out of materialism, and *bearing upon the state of man during the interim between death and the resurrection.*

The immortality of man taught in Scripture, and the only view of it which can imply any real substantial benefit, is that which contemplates the conscious personal being of each individual, as continuing without interruption from the commencement of his existence to all eternity.

Materialism teaches that the soul is dependent on the organization of the brain for its existence. Its theory is, that man is not a compound being composed of two distinct parts, the material and the immaterial, but that he is wholly material; and that what we term the soul is nothing but organized matter, or a function of the brain; and that from this organization all the phenomena of mind result as a necessary sequence. From this postulate it follows, as a necessary corollary, that when the body dies, the soul sinks into an eternal sleep; or, in other words, ceases forever to exist. It is clear that the admission of this doctrine would be a relinquishment of the correct view of the soul's immortality.

It is true, some who hold to the materiality of the soul admit that there will be a resurrection of the body; and they contend that when that shall take place, and the new body be organized, then the soul also will be revived with it, as the necessary result of that organization. This theory, to a superficial observer, may seem to admit both the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul; but, in reality, it is inconsistent with both the one and the other. According to this theory what might seem to be a resurrection of the old body and a restoration of the old soul, can be nothing but a new creation.

The correctness of this position will appear, when we consider what is implied in the proper personal identity of man. *This* is really grounded, not in the body, but in the soul. We do not mean by this that the identity of man, both as to his soul and his body, will not be preserved on both sides of death and of the resurrection, including the interim between them—even from the commencement of his being to all eternity. But our position is, that we can have no evidence of this identity, nor can we conceive it to imply any thing real or substantial, unless the conscious existence of the soul be perpetuated during all the period between death and the resurrection. For if this be denied, by what chain, or ligament, can man this side of death be connected with man the other side of the resurrection?

It has been contended that man's proper identity cannot be grounded on the consciousness of the soul, because this is often suspended, even in this life. To sustain this objection, the appeal has been made to the phenomenon of sleep; and it has been contended that during sleep the soul loses all consciousness of its identity.

To this objection we reply, that there is no evidence that the soul loses this consciousness in sleep. A man in complete mental derangement may imagine himself a being that he is not; but that he does not, even then, connect this being with his former self, we have no means of

proving, or even of knowing. It cannot be disputed that a sane man does, even in his dreams, connect himself with his former waking self; and on awaking from his slumbers, he is conscious that he is the same being that dreamed, as well as the same being he was before he slept.

Were we to admit that the soul loses the consciousness of its identity in sleep, that admission could have no bearing in support of the objection we here oppose, because it cannot be denied that this consciousness is revived the moment we awake. Memory, so to speak, ties the knot between the end of the thread of our history which we drop when we fall asleep, and the end we take up when we awake; so that there is no break in the testimony of consciousness in reference to our personal identity. But there is no possibility of the soul that ceases to be, when the body dies, being connected by the chain of memory with another soul which commences its existence with the organization of the resurrection body. I am as fully conscious that I am the same person to-day that I was yesterday, as I possibly could be if I had lain awake all the while to prevent some one from stealing me away while I slept.

But even if we were to suppose that God might endue the new soul, which commences with the organization of the resurrection body, with a remembrance of the entire history of the former soul, that memory could not connect the soul that had long been extinct with one newly born as being in fact the same. Memory may aid the soul, to some extent, in the exercise of the consciousness of personal identity, but it cannot produce that consciousness of itself. Memory may mirror to my vision the events of yesterday, so that I behold them again; but it is consciousness, not memory, that assures me that the actor of yesterday and the actor of to-day are the same person. If memory alone connects the person of to-day with the person of yesterday, there must be no hiatus in her record. She cannot be allowed to slumber, or withdraw her eye for a moment from the person in question.

To show that the evidence of personal identity does not rest in memory, but in consciousness, we will use an illustration. Suppose a number of coins resembling each other so closely that the eye cannot distinguish the one from the other, how can I know from the evidence of memory that the one in my purse to-day is the same that occupied it yesterday? Is it not clear that I must have it under my surveillance all the time? My assurance of the identity of the coin will be in proportion to my evidence of the impossibility of its having been exchanged. If there be one hour in which it lay upon my table while I was asleep, I cannot know, from memory, that it may not have been exchanged. If assured that the coin has not been exchanged, because my door has

been so strongly barred that it is impossible that the room could have been entered, then my evidence of the identity of the coin rests on that fact, and not on memory.

To prove personal identity from memory, requires reflection and comparison; but the evidence from consciousness is instant and spontaneous. I know when I awake in the morning that I am the same person that I was the day before, not by remembering my former appearance and comparing it with my present appearance, but the conviction springs from consciousness sudden as the flash of thought. The man of seventy is conscious that he is the same being now that he was when a child. He derives this assurance, not by remembering his childhood appearance and comparing it with his present appearance, but this conviction rises as spontaneously as the emotion of joy from the reception of good news.

But admitting that memory may assist consciousness in preparing her testimony to personal identity, our argument against the sleep of the soul with the body in death can lose none of its force by that admission. Memory, as well as consciousness, has its seat in the soul. Hence, if the soul ceases to exist at the death of the body, both memory and consciousness must then perish. If memory and consciousness are no more, all evidence of personal identity is destroyed. And if the evidence of personal identity be destroyed, we can attach no sensible import to the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, or the future state of the soul.

There is no fact in all the range of experimental knowledge, and of physiological science, of which we are more perfectly assured than this —that the consciousness of personal identity is preserved by every intelligent being, from the earliest to the latest period of his rational existence upon earth. And that this consciousness of personal identity is according to the truth and reality of things, no rational mind can doubt. But on the supposition that the soul ceases to exist from the dissolution of the body till the resurrection at the last day, what proof can there be establishing the position that a consciousness of personal identity can connect this life with the next?

If it be said that when the resurrection body is produced, and its fine-wrought materials organized, a new soul of a far more elevated character than the present one shall result from that organization, and that God can inspire that new soul with a consciousness that it is identical with the former soul whose existence ceased at the death of the body—if this position be taken, then the theory will be encumbered by insurmountable difficulties.

First, if the materials and organization of the new body be vastly superior in polish and refinement to those of the old body, how is it possible that what results from the two organizations can be the same? It is a principle in philosophy, that like causes produce like effects, and that different causes produce different effects. But here is a case in which different causes are supposed to produce the same effect.

Secondly, it is here supposed that God may inspire the new soul with the consciousness that it is identical with the former soul, when such a persuasion would, in point of fact, be untrue. There are some things too hard for Omnipotence. God cannot lie, nor do any thing wrong; neither can he do what implies a contradiction or an absurdity. Hence it is quite too much to require us to believe that God *would*, or *could*, inspire the new soul with a consciousness of the identity of what is not identical; or, in other words, that God should inspire a falsehood. If the mind is only the brain, or a function of the brain, at the death of the body it ceases to exist, and is nothing. Now, can that which is nothing be identical with that which is something? Can the soul which once existed, but which for centuries had ceased to exist, be identical with that which has just been produced, and which never did exist before?

In the case of bodily sleep, when we wake from our slumber, we are conscious of the same personal identity which we had before we slept. But if the soul sleeps in non-existence from death till the resurrection, and is then reproduced as the result of a new organization, how is it possible it can have a consciousness of identity with the former soul? Can it be conscious of what is contrary to fact? Can that which has just come forth from nonentity have any memory connecting it with the past, and identifying it with something which had once existed, but which for centuries had ceased to exist? or can it have a memory of things that transpired centuries before its existence?

Allowing personal identity to consist in the consciousness of the soul, that it is the same person—the same conscious, self-active, and responsible agent it was in childhood—and allowing the soul still to continue to exist, preserving this same consciousness of personal identity and responsibility—allowing *this*, we can then recognize the import and consistency of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, and of the future conscious existence of the soul.

By the identity of the body, we do not mean that the particles of matter from childhood to old age are precisely the same. These may all have been changed, including even the substance of the brain, some five or six times. Though decay and renewal, dilapidation and repairs,

may have still been going on, yet we are not conscious of having changed *our* body for that of another person. On the contrary, we are conscious all the while that each day we possess the same body we had the day before. On the supposition that the soul still lives on through life, and from death till the resurrection, preserving a consciousness of its personal identity as the same responsible being—while this is the case, the identity of the body is still preserved.

The moment we admit that during the interim from death to the resurrection there is no conscious being living on to connect the conscious being before death with the conscious being after the resurrection, there can, in the nature of things, be no resurrection. For if we admit that God should raise up the same material that once composed a body, how can a soul that has just sprung into being, on the organization of that new body, be conscious of that having once been its body, when it had not? And without this consciousness of receiving the identical body it had before inhabited, how can it realize a resurrection? If unconscious of ever having had a body, how can it be conscious of taking up the body it once laid down? And without this, how can it realize a resurrection?

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXXVIII.

QUESTION 1. Upon what is the principal objection to the doctrine of the soul's immortality founded?
2. What Jewish sect were materialists?
3. When did this heresy originate in the Christian Church?
4. What is the theory of materialism?
5. How do we gain a knowledge of the existence of the soul?
6. How are *matter* and *spirit* proved to be essentially different by their respective properties?
7. How is it proved that matter is not intelligent?
8. How is it proved that the material substance of the brain is not possessed of memory?
9. To what form of skepticism does materialism lead?
10. What does materialism teach as to the state of the soul when the body dies?
11. Upon what is man's proper personal identity grounded?
12. Why is the conscious existence of the soul, during the interim between death and the resurrection, necessary to man's immortality?

CHAPTER XXXIX.

IMMORTALITY OF THE HUMAN SOUL—THE DOCTRINE ESTABLISHED

THE doctrine of immortality is emphatically a doctrine of revelation. To whatever extent the *mere hope* of a future state may be enkindled by the paler light of nature, yet it is now generally admitted by the best-informed Christian philosophers, that the doctrine of immortality can only be *established* by a direct revelation from Heaven. Nature may impart the *hope*—revelation alone can give the *assurance*. And while we are far from agreeing with those who teach that the doctrine of immortality is not embraced in the Old Testament, and constituted no part of the Jewish religion, yet we freely admit that it remained for the clearer revelations of the gospel to bring this doctrine fully to light. Christ, by his luminous teachings, and especially by his triumphant resurrection, "hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light."

But the great question now before us is this: Is that immaterial, spiritual essence, which, as shown in the preceding chapter, dwells within us, destined to die with the body, and sleep with it in the tomb? Or, will it triumph over the ravages of death, and live on forever? Skepticism has scoffed at the doctrine of the soul's immortality; pagan philosophy, in its most enlightened and virtuous phase, has trembled between hope and despair on the question; but Christianity, upon the authority of a direct revelation from Heaven, has exultantly asserted the truth of the doctrine. But let us look at the evidence by which it is sustained.

I. WE NOTICE SOME PRESUMPTIVE ARGUMENTS DERIVED FROM NATURE AND REASON.

1. *The soul's immortality may be argued from the pernicious tendency of the rejection of this doctrine.*

The system of truth is symmetrical and cohering. All its elements hang together like links in a chain, as consistent parts of an harmonious whole. We assume it as an unquestionable axiom, that one truth can neither be inconsistent with another in its nature, nor productive of

evil in its tendency. If it can be shown that a *belief* in immortality and the retributions of an hereafter is, necessarily, a safeguard to virtue and morality, and of real beneficial tendency, this *fact* will be a presumptive argument in favor of the doctrine, of great weight with all sober-minded thinkers. That the adoption of skepticism in reference to a future state is of demoralizing tendency, is a position so clearly palpable to the unbiased mind, that we consider it scarcely a debatable point.

It is a principle extensively recognized by the jurisprudence and civil tribunals of enlightened Christendom, that the testimony of a disbeliever in future rewards and punishments is scarcely to be admitted in a court of justice. And *why* is this the case? It results from the general conviction that he whose actions here are not, in some degree at least, molded, influenced, or restrained, by a belief in an hereafter, is not to be trusted, even upon oath. What gives to the oath of the citizen before the civil magistrate its authority and force? It is *that* reference to the holy volume, and the solemn appeal to God, the final judge of all, which the oath implies. The solemnity of the oath, giving to every citizen confidence in judges, legislators, jurors, and all the officers of government, from the chief executive down to the impanneled juryman, is based upon the doctrine of man's immortality—a belief in the retributions of an hereafter. Let but the principles of skepticism which antagonize this doctrine gain that firm footing in public sentiment which the belief in immortality now holds, and how direful the consequences that would ensue! Let it be the first lesson of the nursery, and the revered motto of every school and seminary of learning throughout the land; let it be proclaimed from every tribunal, every platform, and every pulpit, that *there is no hereafter!* and what mind can conceive, or what heart could endure, the speedy result? All confidence between man and his fellow would be destroyed; harmony and peace would give place to discord and strife; the flood-gates of vice and immorality would be lifted, and a deluge of evil would overflow the land! The strongest bulwarks of virtue, morality, and religion, would be demolished, and crime and outrage, bloodshed and violence, would everywhere prevail!

Look at what was the condition of France when that frenzied nation denounced the truths of revelation—proclaimed it as their national creed that "death is an eternal sleep," and that "there is no God but reason!" and in blasphemous derision, had the holy book of God dragged through the streets of Paris at the tail of an ass! It was, indeed, the reign of terror! Friend could not meet friend in the street

without fearing his dagger! The lanes and avenues of the city, and the highways and by-paths of the country, were dyed with the blood of the assassinated citizens, till the very heart of humanity shuddered and grew sick at the spectacle, ready to rush into the arms of despotism as an asylum from the furies of infidel anarchy! And such would soon be the disorder and ruin everywhere, if the doctrine of the soul's immortality were discarded. Better blot the sun from the heavens above us, than this doctrine from the hearts of the people!

2. *Our next argument is founded on the fact that the doctrine of immortality has been recognized, with greater or less clearness, by the wisest and best of mankind in all ages.*

An examination of accredited history shows that the united voice of ancient nations is in favor of this doctrine. It was acknowledged by the Egyptians, the Phenicians, the Persians, the Scythians, the Assyrians, the Celts, and the Druids, as well as the Greeks and the Romans.

"Never," says Dr. Blair, "has any nation been discovered on the face of the earth so rude and barbarous that, in the midst of their wildest superstitions, there was not cherished among them some expectation of a state after death in which the virtuous were to enjoy happiness."

Plato says: "When, therefore, death comes upon a man, what is mortal in him perishes, as it is seen to do; but what is immortal withdraws itself from death, safe and uncorrupted."

Cicero says: "If I am wrong in believing the souls of men immortal, I please myself in my mistake; nor while I live will I ever choose that this opinion with which I am so much delighted, should ever be wrested from me. But if at death I am to be annihilated, as some philosophers suppose, I am not afraid lest those wise men, when extinct too, should laugh at my error."

We may add, there is not a nation, or tribe, of whom history furnishes an account, that did not, with greater or less clearness, believe in a future state. Though the views of most of them were obscure and unsatisfactory, embracing much that was ridiculous and absurd, yet their *hopes* penetrated the gloomy future, giving evidence of an internal consciousness of the insufficiency of this world to satisfy the aspirations of their souls.

But how shall we account for this universal persuasion of mankind? "If it was a local tradition, we might refer it to some local cause. If it had been limited to some one age, we might attribute it to some peculiar development or bias of the mind of that age resulting from a temporary cause. But what shall we say when we find it bounded by no clime, and limited to no age, but one of the deepest and most universal

sentiments of humanity? There can be but one answer. The sentiment is inspired with the very consciousness of life, and therefore appeals to the great Author of life as its source. It must, then, be true. A belief thus originated, so universal, cannot be without a substantial basis in truth. In a word, it is proof sublime of immortality. It is demonstration that death works only the change, not the destruction, of the soul." (Dr. D. W. Clark's "Man all Immortal.")

3. *Our next argument is founded on the innate desire of the soul for immortality.*

The thirst for a continued pursuit of knowledge appears almost universal. But in this intellectual chase, who has reached the desired goal?

> "But whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
> This longing after immortality?
> Or whence this secret dread and inward horror
> Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul
> Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
> 'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
> 'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
> And intimates eternity to man."

Unless we admit that this desire has been impressed upon the constitution of our nature by the hand of our Maker, how can we account for its general prevalence? And can we suppose a God of infinite wisdom and goodness has imparted these pleasing hopes merely to be ended in disappointment? Will God mock his creatures, and light up a star of hope only to go out in endless night? No!

> "The soul, secure in her existence, smiles
> At the drawn dagger, and defies its point:
> The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
> Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;
> But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
> Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
> The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds."

4. *Our next argument for the immortality of the soul is founded upon the unequal distribution of rewards and punishments in this life.*

A glance at the history of the world, and a little attention to the state of things around us, will evince that rewards and punishments are not meted out in the present state in exact accordance with the actions of individuals. How frequently have the wicked and abominable been permitted to pass unpunished! The tyrant, while crushing thousands of the innocent and the unoffending beneath his iron heel of power, has

feasted upon the richest luxuries of life, and drank to satiety at every fount of worldly pleasure. The proud and the licentious, the avaricious and the cruel, have too frequently occupied the high places of the earth, and escaped in this life the punishment due to their crimes.

On the other hand, those celebrated for virtue and piety have often been the most afflicted of our race. Abraham, the father of the faithful, was most sorely tried. Moses, the meek servant of God, met the scoffs and reproaches of his ungodly countrymen, and "endured as seeing him who is invisible." Job and Daniel, Isaiah and Jeremiah, the apostles and martyrs — in a word, the good of every age, have generally been called in this life to pass through the furnace of affliction. For their "patience of hope, and labor of love," an ungrateful world has requited them with bonds, imprisonment, tortures, and death. But justice will not forever sleep. The wicked will not always escape, nor the righteous go forever unrewarded. A future state is necessary to rectify these disorders, and to exhibit to an intelligent universe that he who reigns over all is a God of justice.

5. *Our next argument for the soul's immortality is founded upon its vast powers.*

The utmost capacity of the human intellect has never yet been exhibited. The shortness of human life, together with the innumerable hindrances with which the most highly favored must necessarily contend, in their intellectual pursuits, has ever precluded the possibility of testing, by example, what the human intellect, under more favorable circumstances, might accomplish. Yet the achievements of mind, in the various departments of knowledge, have been truly astonishing.

The mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, have passed under philosophic review. The penetrating genius of a Locke has scanned the powers of the human intellect, and described the laws of mind in so clear and forcible a manner as to win an immortality of fame. The capacious intellect of a Bacon has surveyed the entire circle of human science, and marked the appropriate line of intellectual pursuit for succeeding generations. Nor has the research been restricted to the globe we inhabit. The towering mind of a Newton has soared from world to world, estimated the magnitudes and distances of those immense orbs, and expatiated on the laws binding them together and guiding them in their harmonious revolutions.

Contemplating the soul as the center and source of all mental achievement and all moral emotion, how transcendently great must be its powers! It stands confessed as the greater, the nobler, part of our nature. It is as much superior to the body as heaven is higher than

earth. A material of finer texture than the body, it is wrought up to a higher state of perfection. All that is profound in the researches of intellect—all that is attractive or picturesque in the creations of fancy —all that is grand or sublime in the visions of imagination—all that is heroic in patriotism, angelic in virtue, or godlike in devotion, is but the goings forth of the inner nature—the outbreathings of the soul.

The body has to do with things of earth. As the instrument of the soul, it can reach forth its hand and grasp the treasures of the world, it can open its eye and ear upon all the beauty and melody that surround it; but the soul can take a nobler flight, and hold converse with spiritual things; she can spread her wings abroad, and soar aloft to the heights of heaven; she can mingle with seraphim and cherubim in gazing with wonder and admiration upon the outshining power, and wisdom, and goodness, and glory, of the Supreme Ruler of the universe. The utmost capacity of the human soul has never yet been fully tested on earth. We have witnessed the exploits of talent and genius in their various departments. We have seen something of what the powers of the soul have accomplished; but we know not the extent to which those powers might be conducted. Philosophy, in all her departments, has spread open her wide fields for the range of the human soul. The deep mysteries of nature have been explored, and her most subtle agencies tamed by the genius of man, and rendered obsequious to his bidding, and tributary to his comfort. The sublime doctrines of revelation have been surveyed, and the rich promises of an endless life have been grasped by the human soul, as the pledge of an undying hope and a blissful immortality.

Can it be that powers so noble, so lofty and capacious, are destined just to begin to unfold themselves on earth, and then, like a bubble bursting on the bosom of the sea, disappear forever? Has infinite Wisdom and Power created an intelligence so highly endowed, merely to flutter a brief moment on the surface of the earth, and then to sink back into nonentity? Philosophy, reason, every thing within and around us, revolts at the idea!

Can we suppose that all that has ever been exhibited great and majestic in the human soul, has passed into eternal unconsciousness? Look at the electric genius and Attic splendor of Homer; the struggling hopes of Plato; the incorruptible integrity of Aristides. Look at the heroic patriotism of Moses; the unyielding patience of Job; the angelic devotion of David; the glowing pathos of the prophets, and the dauntless zeal of the apostles. *Can* it be that those choice and noble spirits, in whom these heavenly qualities once shone with such luster,

like the flitting shadow, have vanished from existence forever? Reason and every ennobling hope within us, and every attribute of God above us, forbid the hypothesis that this lofty nature is born to-day to perish forever to-morrow!

> "Who reads his bosom reads immortal life;
> Or nature there, imposing on her sons
> Has written fables—man was made a lie!"

II. We now appeal to the teachings of Scripture, on the immortality of the soul.

Having called attention to some of the principal arguments in favor of a future state, derived from nature and reason alone, we now proceed briefly to examine the Scripture evidence on the subject. This is one of those leading and important doctrines which find their support on almost every page of the Bible. Indeed, if we discard the doctrine of an hereafter, no part of the Scriptures can be satisfactorily construed: the entire volume, as a whole, will be an unintelligible enigma. To such as believe in the truth of divine revelation, a few of the many quotations that might be presented, of a direct and pointed character, will be quite as satisfactory as a great number of texts could be; therefore we shall be brief in our presentation of proof.

1. *We first bring our testimony from the Old Testament.*

We here premise that all those scriptures which speak of the resurrection of the body, establish also the immortality of the soul. These two doctrines hang together, imparting to each other mutual support and confirmation. "The body without the spirit is dead;" and to suppose a resurrection of the material part of our nature, without connecting with it the immaterial conscious self by which it is now inhabited, would overthrow every thing connected with the resurrection, of which we can conceive as desirable, or of any substantial benefit. If my soul—my conscious self—is to pass into nonentity when my body dies, of what consequence can the material particles laid in the grave then be to me? They could be no more to me, either *then* or *now*, than the dust beneath my feet. And according to that hypothesis, the idea of deriving any encouraging hope from such a resurrection is perfectly preposterous. But let us inquire, What were the views and hopes of the Old Testament worthies on this subject?

Hear the solemn strain of triumph poured from the lips of the afflicted saint of Uz: "O that my words were now written! (for they are too weighty to be allowed to perish with the voice as it dies away upon the air;) O that they were printed in a book! (that they might

be circulated throughout all lands and among all peoples.) That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! (that they might remain an enduring monument to testify to the latest generations this solemn confession of my faith and hope.) For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job. xix. 23–27.

On this subject, hear also the exultant language of the sweet singer of Israel: "My strength and my heart faileth; (that is, my body tendeth to the tomb;) but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." Ps. lxxiii. 26. That is, when my body dies, God will still be the comfort and the "portion" of my soul. Again: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Ps. xvii. 15. "My flesh also shall rest in hope; for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, (the grave,) neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures *forevermore*." Ps. xvi. 9–11.

Once more: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and (after the dissolution of my body) I will dwell in the house of the Lord *forever*." Ps. xxxiii. 4, 6. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." Ps. lxxiii. 24.

In reference to the passages already quoted, we undertake to say that no sane, unbiased mind, willing to be governed by common sense, *can* understand them to teach otherwise than that these Old Testament saints comforted their hearts amid the afflictions and tribulations of this life, with the hope of happiness in the next. Hence, if these hopes were not all delusive, which the fact of their inspiration will not admit, then it inevitably follows that the soul of the Christian does not go out like an extinguished taper at death, but will live on in a state of endless fruition.

We next adduce the testimony of the Prophet Daniel: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars *forever and ever*." Dan. xii. 3. Now, as the body cannot live here "forever and ever," this must refer to the future state. Many other proofs of the point in question might

be brought from the Old Testament; but if those offered are not satisfactory, more would be useless.

2. *We now turn to the New Testament.*

(1) We present testimony from the words of our Lord.

"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matt. x. 28.

It is plain, from this text, that though men have power to kill the body, they *cannot* kill the soul. From this it follows that the soul is neither a function of the brain, nor does it die with the body; for if so, men, in killing the body, would necessarily kill the soul also, which the text denies them the power to do.

"But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Matt. xxii. 31, 32.

It is undeniable, from this text, that the soul still lives after the body dies. The bodies of these patriarchs had been buried for centuries, and yet our Saviour teaches that their souls were still living, and that God was still their God.

The account given by our Saviour of the "rich man" and Lazarus, (Luke xvi. 22, 23,) whether we view it as a parable or a history, demonstrates the existence of the soul, in a state of conscious happiness or misery, after the death of the body.

The words of Christ to the thief on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," (Luke xxiii. 43,) are proof to the same effect. It was not the dead body, but the surviving soul, that went immediately to paradise.

Our Saviour's discourse, in the sixth chapter of John, is most palpable proof of the immortality of the soul. Among other expressions, note the following: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, *he shall live forever.*" Many more proofs equally conclusive might be adduced from our Lord's discourses, but it is needless: we have given enough to satisfy such as are willing to be governed by his sayings. Yet we must be allowed to add one more: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John xiv. 2, 3.

(2) *Evidence on the subject given by the apostles.*

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dis-

solved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." "We are confident, I say, willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." 2 Cor. v. 1, 6, 8.

We cannot conceive how language could be framed to prove more explicitly the point in question, than do these words of St. Paul. After the earthly tabernacle of the body shall be dissolved, he speaks confidently of inhabiting another house "*eternal* in the heavens." And his language admits of no intermediate space of unconsciousness, or nonentity, between the laying down of the body and the taking possession of the heavenly house. So soon as he is "absent from the body," he is confident of being "present with the Lord."

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Phil. i. 21, 23, 24.

Now, it is most unquestionable that the apostle expected to "be with Christ," so soon as death should close his labors with the Church. Hence his language demonstrates that the soul neither dies nor sleeps with the body, in the grave or anywhere else, but is immediately "with Christ, which is far better." This implies a state of conscious happiness.

Once more: St. Paul says, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. iv. 6–8.

St. Peter speaks in tones of exultant joy of his hope of immortal bliss: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you; who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Pet. i. 3–5.

Upon the hypothesis that the soul ceases to exist when the body dies, or that an immortality of felicity awaits not the righteous after death, how impossible must it be for any sensible construction to be placed upon the scriptures we have presented, and many others that might be produced! We pursue the theme no farther. If the skeptic can gain

delight to his own heart by persuading himself that unconcious nonentity is his own future heritage, let him—if he *will*—take his dark and gloomy course alone, nor vainly strive to destroy the foundation of the righteous.

"O listen, man!
A voice within us speaks that startling word:
'Man, thou shalt never die!' Celestial voices
Hymn it unto our souls: according harps,
By angel fingers touched, when the mild stars
Of morning sang together, sound forth still
The song of our great immortality."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XXXIX.

QUESTION 1. To what extent is immortality a doctrine of revelation?
2. Is it taught in the Old Testament?
3. How has it been viewed by pagans?
4. How is it argued from the tendency of its rejection?
5. How, from the belief of all nations?
6. How, from the soul's innate desire?
7. How, from the inequality of rewards and punishments?
8. How, the souls of vast powers?
9. In what way can the immortality of the soul be argued from the resurrection of the body?
10. How may the soul's immortality be proved from the Old Testament?
11. How may it be proved from the words of Christ?
12. How, from the teachings of the apostles?

CHAPTER XL.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE HUMAN BODY.

THE *resurrection* of the human body from the dead, is a doctrine depending entirely upon revelation for its support.

I. But before we examine the Scripture account of the subject, we will briefly notice some *philosophical objections* frequently urged against it.

1. The captious infidel and the ingenious materialist have represented it as "a thing incredible that God should raise the dead." They have founded their objection upon *the laws of matter*, which, according to their showing, forbid the supposition that a decayed human body should again be raised to life.

In reply to this objection we ask, What are the laws of matter which are supposed to present this insuperable obstacle? A *law*, considered in itself, is not an active agent, possessed of self-moving power. It can only be properly understood to imply the mode in which the actions of a self-moving agent are conducted. The *laws of matter* can only imply the mode in which the divine power, which originally created the material universe, proceeds in its government and control. That these laws, thus considered, are profoundly mysterious, presenting at every step what is incomprehensible to the human intellect, none will deny. But this very fact should rather admonish us of the propriety of extreme cautiousness in asserting what is or is not forbidden by the laws in question. Before we can be prepared for assertions of so bold and sweeping a character, we should understand the nature of these mysterious principles more thoroughly than the most skillful philosopher dare pretend. Who can say that he comprehends the laws of matter? The wisest philosopher stumbles at the very threshold, and finds in the smallest spire of grass, or the most insignificant insect, mysteries too profound for his comprehension. How, then, can he be prepared for assertions so general and unqualified, that they can only be safely based upon a thorough knowledge of the subject?

But suppose, for the sake of argument, we admit that the resurrection of the human body is contrary to the laws of matter, as they now

exist, might we not ask, who is the Author of those laws? And may not the same divine Being who originally framed and constantly regulates them, change or modify them at pleasure? Can it be sound philosophy to say, if the resurrection is a work attributed to God alone, that a law of his own framing, depending entirely upon his will for its existence, shall impede the exercise of his own wonder-working power, in the accomplishment of his purpose?

We are, however, far from admitting that this doctrine conflicts with the laws of matter. It is very true that, according to our experience and observation, the resurrection of the human body from the grave does not result from the regular operation of those laws. When dead human bodies are interred, we have not observed that new bodies arise from their ruins; but how can we certainly know that this necessarily results from an insuperable obstacle interposed by the laws of matter? From any thing that we can see, it may be accounted for by referring it entirely to the will of God. Had the great Creator seen fit so to direct, the resurrection of the human body from the grave might have been as common an occurrence as that of death itself; and were such the fact, it would present no more difficulty to our minds than any other mysterious process of nature; and skeptical philosophy, so far from pronouncing it a deviation from the laws of matter, would view it as a necessary result of those laws.

In confirmation of the position here assumed, we appeal to the process of vegetation, and ask the candid mind to decide whether it does not present mysteries as great as are involved in the doctrine of the resurrection? From the decayed seed we see springing forth the plant, bearing even sixty or a hundred-fold of similar seeds. If it be pronounced contrary to the laws of matter that one new body should come forth from one decayed body, would not the fair analogical inference be, that it is contrary to the laws of matter that one new seed should come forth from one decayed seed? But when we see many new seeds proceeding from a single decayed one, is not the seeming difficulty increased in proportion to the number of seeds? It is true that we have become so familiar with the process of vegetation that we are but slightly impressed with the difficulty which it involves. I think, however, we may safely affirm, that if the resurrection of the human body were as common as the process of vegetation, and the latter as unprecedented as the former, the same philosophy which pronounces the resurrection of the human body inconsistent with the laws of matter, would then, with equal, if not greater, show of reason, make a similar declaration in reference to the process of vegetation. Hence the argument against the resurrection, as

it bears with equal force against an every-day process of nature, is seen to be fallacious.

2. The resurrection of the body has been farther opposed, from *the assumed changes which take place in its substance during life.*

To this we reply, that, admitting the supposition of these changes to be correct, they present no difficulty in the way of the resurrection; for the proper personal sameness of the body, through the successive stages of human life, is still preserved. The man is the same, so far as personal identity is concerned, in infancy and at death. If personal identity be not preserved amid all these supposed changes, the common forms of speech, our own consciousness, and the civil jurisprudence of all countries, are calculated to mislead; for they all contemplate each individual as continuing the same person through every period of life. But were we to admit that these changes destroy the personal identity of the body, the doctrine of the resurrection could not be affected thereby; for it is predicated of the same body which is laid in the grave.

3. Once more: the resurrection of the body has been objected to, because of the difficulty implied in the fact that its decayed substance may enter into the composition of vegetable matter, which, being received as food, may pass into the substance of other bodies; and thus present a commingling of the substance of bodies. We reply to this by saying, that if, as we have already seen, the change and commingling of the substance of bodies cannot destroy their sameness during life, why cannot the same divine power still be exercised over the scattered fragments after death, so that every thing essential to their identity shall still be preserved? In a word, we may say that the entire argument against the resurrection, based upon philosophical difficulties, is sufficiently answered by an appeal to the infinite power of God, to the exercise of which the resurrection is attributed.

II. We proceed, next, to the consideration of the *Scripture proof* of the resurrection.

1. It has been thought by some that the resurrection of the body is a doctrine *peculiar to the New Testament;* but this is certainly not correct. It is true that we there find the doctrine more clearly and fully presented, and witness its practical exemplification in the resurrection of Christ; but whoever will carefully examine the Old Testament on the subject, may easily perceive that, although the "Sadducees denied that there is a resurrection of the dead," yet the ancient prophets and saints were animated by the glorious hope it inspires.

That, amid his deep affliction, holy Job was comforted by this pleasing doctrine, we learn from the following exclamation: "For I know

that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

In Isaiah xxvi. 19, that evangelical prophet speaks in the following animated strain: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

In Daniel xii. 2, we read: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues! O grave, I will be thy destruction!" Hosea xiii. 14.

These passages from the Old Testament are sufficient to show that the saints of God, under the former comparatively dark dispensation, guided by inspiration, looked beyond this vale of tears to the unfolding glories of the resurrection morn.

2. We proceed, in the next place, to *that more complete exhibition of the doctrine contained in the New Testament.*

In Matt. xxii. 23, 32, we are presented with an account of the "Sadducees, who say that there is no resurrection," coming to Jesus, and questioning him on the subject. In his answer are the following words: "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." These words are quoted from Exodus iii. 6, 16, and were spoken three hundred years after the death of Abraham; and, as our Lord declares, they were spoken "touching the resurrection of the dead." In John v. 28, 29, we read: "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

In Phil. iii. 20, 21, we read these words: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." In 1 Thess. iv. 14–18, we read: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say

unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." In Rev. xx. 12, 13, we read: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works."

In 1 Cor. xv. 12, we have the doctrine of the resurrection argued and illustrated at length, and the resurrection of Christ appealed to by the apostle, in confirmation of the same. As this is the most direct discussion of the subject contained in the Scriptures, we present it entire, from the twelfth verse to the end of the chapter, as follows:

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only, we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him.

And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. Else what shall they do, which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die. Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God I speak this to your shame. But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain; it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought

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to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

III. We now inquire, What will be the *character of the resurrection body?*

1. It will be the *identical body* laid in the grave—that is, it will be composed of the same matter, though greatly changed in properties and circumstances from what it had been in life.

As human nature, in its essential elements, is the same in all ages, it is not surprising that the doctrine of the resurrection should be confronted with cavils now, as in the days of St. Paul. Men now, as then, by way of objection, exclaim: "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" In commenting on this subject, the apostle exclaims: "Behold, I show you a mystery." Hence we should not expect to be able fully to comprehend or explain it. But our faith in the doctrine should not stagger at the mystery it involves, since the accomplishment of the work has been referred by the apostle to the omnipotence of God—it is effected "according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself."

Some who profess faith in Christ, and in the truth of his gospel, have allowed themselves to be so seduced by skeptical notions, that they have *explained* the resurrection of the body until they have completely *explained it away*, ending by flatly denying it in deed and in truth, if not in words. By the resurrection of the body, they would wish us simply to understand, that when the soul of the saint leaves the body at death, it instantly enters a new-made spiritual body, in which it soars to heaven, leaving the old body of flesh and bone to rest in the arms of an eternal sleep. Thus would they have us believe in a resurrection which is no resurrection. For the substance, they would give us the shadow; for the radiance which the gospel sheds upon the sepulcher of our buried friends, they would give us the gloom of an eternal midnight. If men choose to amuse themselves with theories of their own invention, let them not attempt to impose them upon others, by professing to derive them from the Bible. For what can be plainer than the fact that the Bible teaches the doctrine of the literal resurrection of the body?

It is the *dead* who are to be raised. It is *the body* which is "sown in

corruption," that is to be "raised in incorruption;" *that* which is "sown in dishonor," is to be "raised in glory;" the *same* that is "sown in weakness," is to be "raised in power;" *that body* which is "sown a natural body," the *same*, and not another, is to be "raised a spiritual body." "All that are *in the graves* shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." Was that spiritual body which the soul is supposed to put on at death ever *in the grave?* How, then, can *it* be the resurrection body? The theory which thus teaches is as palpably anti-scriptural as any thing can be conceived to be. It even denies the resurrection of Christ, and makes "vain," not only the "preaching" of the apostle, but the "faith" of the Christian; for it is "our vile body" which is to "be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body."

2. It will be a *spiritual body.* This the apostle has expressly declared; but what shall be the peculiar properties of those "spiritual" bodies, distinguishing them from gross matter, and from the immaterial essence which is to dwell within them, is placed beyond our reach. In this respect, 'it doth not yet appear what we shall be." This much, however, is clear: they will be free from weariness, pain, and death. The inhabitants of that land shall never say, "We are sick." "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more." "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

3. *The risen bodies of the saints shall resemble the glorified body of our Lord.*

St. Paul says: "They shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body." And St. John asserts: "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

Perhaps the transfiguration of Christ on Mount Tabor was designed to impart a faint idea concerning the glorious character of the resurrection body. St. Matthew says: "He was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." So overwhelming was the impression on the minds of the apostles, that they seemed for the time to be unconscious that they were in the body, or belonged to this lower world. Peter said: "Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." How transcendently glorious must have been the body of our Lord, when the apostles were so transported by its effulgence as to forget that they were still pilgrims of earth, and inhabitants of tabernacles of clay! And yet, here was presented but a faint adumbration of that glorified body, before which

angels are now, in deep admiration, veiling their faces, and "like unto" which the bodies of the risen saints are to "be fashioned." Well might St. Paul, in speaking on this subject, exclaim: "Behold, I show you a mystery." Yes! it is a mystery sufficient to fill even heaven itself with amazement, that these frail bodies should be exalted to such celestial glory.

4. But *there is to be a resurrection "both of the just and of the unjust.*" Some are to be raised "to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." But while we are furnished with intimations so bright, in reference to the bodies of the saints, a cloud, dark as midnight, is left upon the bodies of the wicked. We may reasonably infer that they will be as horrible in their appearance as sin and guilt can render them.

5. Again: *the resurrection is to be universal.* All the human family that have lived and died, from Adam to his youngest son. How vast, therefore, will be the assemblage! "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump," all, from the earth and from the sea, from Asia, Europe, Africa, America, and from the scattered isles that spot the ocean, of every people, language, and character, shall then come forth to life. While the dead, in countless millions, shall leave their earthly sepulcher or watery grave, the living "shall be changed," and all "shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air."

6. Once more: As *to the time of the resurrection*, some have supposed, from the twentieth chapter of Revelation, that the martyrs are to be raised "a thousand years" before "the rest of the dead;" but the more probable opinion is, that the resurrection there spoken of is figurative; that the martyrs are to be raised in the holy lives and burning zeal of the living saints, in the same sense in which the holy Elijah was raised in the person of John the Baptist.

The general tenor of Scripture on this subject seems to indicate that all the dead shall be raised at the same time; or, at least, with no considerable interval of time between. The apostle speaks of the resurrection in general as taking place "at the sound of the trump." Martha said to the Saviour, in reference to her brother Lazarus, "I know that he shall rise again, in the resurrection, at *the last day.*" From these, and other passages, we conclude that the resurrection of the whole human family shall take place "at the end of the world." But how long the world is to stand, is known to God alone. "At such an hour as we look not, the Son of man shall come."

7. We close this chapter by presenting the doctrine of the resurrection as *a ground of encouraging hope to the Christian.*

That a glorious resurrection, and a blissful immortality, animated the hopes of the Old Testament saints, is testified by St. Paul, in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews. In reference to Abraham he says: "He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Of Moses he says: "He had respect unto the recompense of the reward." Who can read the history of the ancient worthies, as detailed in the Old Testament, or as commented on by St. Paul, in the chapter above named, and believe that their hopes were limited to the present world? "If in this life only they had hope," how can we account for their perseverance amid persecution and affliction? They "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy;) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." And what, we may ask, encouraged and animated their souls? Surely nothing on this side the grave. Their faith pierced the vista of futurity. It rose above the world, and fastened upon a "better inheritance" in the celestial Canaan.

But when we open the New Testament, and read the history of the apostles and first Christians, we find the resurrection of the dead their constant inspiring theme. They "preached Jesus and the resurrection" as the ground of their own consolation, and the only hope of a ruined world. Sustained and comforted by this doctrine, "they counted not their own lives dear unto them," but, with undaunted heroism, faced the frowns and scoffs of an ungodly world; and many of them fell martyrs to the holy cause. From the apostles' days to the present time, in all the successive ages of the Church, this glorious doctrine has animated the Christian's heart in the darkest hour of his pilgrimage, and in the extremity of death enabled him to shout: "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?"

In conclusion, we would ask, What brighter hope can we, as Christians, desire, than this doctrine inspires? It lifts to our believing eyes the veil of futurity; it lights up the smile of joy on the lip of death; it pours a heavenly radiance on the dark and lonely tomb; and, in accents sweet as angelic voices can pronounce, whispers in the ear of the disconsolate mourner, as he closes the eyes, or follows to the grave the pale remains of the most beloved one on earth: "Thy brother shall rise again!" Erase the pleasing hope of the resurrection from the Christian's heart and you blot the sun from his moral firmament, and darkness—thick, impenetrable darkness—enshrouds the life, and settles upon

the tomb. But let this hope bloom with the freshness of immortality in the believer's soul, and he can smile amid the storms of life, and triumph in the hour of dissolution, exclaiming with the apostle: "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XL.

Question 1. On what does the doctrine of the resurrection depend for its support?
2. What philosophical objection is made to it?
3. What is the reply?
4. What Scripture proofs are brought from the Old Testament?
5. What from the New Testament?
6. How is it proved that the same body laid in the grave is to be raised?
7. What is implied in the *spirituality* of the resurrection body?
8. What is said of its resemblance to the glorified body of our Lord?
9. How is it shown that both the *just* and the *unjust* shall be raised, and what is said of the bodies of the latter?
10. Are the whole human family to be raised?
11. Are all to be raised at the same time?
12. What is the proof?
13. How is it shown that this doctrine encouraged the hopes of the Old Testament saints?
14. How is it shown that it animated the apostles and first Christians?
15. What should be its influence on Christians in all ages?
16. What would be the effect if the doctrine were renounced?

CHAPTER XLI.

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

THIS is one of the most solemn and deeply-interesting subjects exhibited in the Bible; yet it rarely occupies a degree of serious thought commensurate with its importance. Many, if they reflect on the subject at all, view it as a matter so immensely distant, that it fails to impress their minds with that solemnity which its importance should inspire.

I. We inquire, first, for the *evidences of the fact* that there will be a general judgment.

1. The certainty of this general judgment may be argued, first, from the *attributes* of God. All who believe in the existence of God, must admit that he is a being of infinite perfections. He must not only be possessed of infinite wisdom and goodness, but also of infinite justice, equity, and rectitude. And as he has seen fit to create rational, intelligent, moral agents, his government over them must not only be in accordance with the nature with which he has endued them, but also in harmony with his own perfections. Hence he must not govern them either as inanimate substances or as irrational beings, but as accountable subjects. This requires that they be placed under a law which is holy, just, and good, according to the nature of God their maker; and that they be rewarded or punished, not according to the whim or caprice of an arbitrary tyrant, but in consistency with the principles of strict justice and equity.

Upon the hypothesis that the existence of man terminates with his present mode of being, agreeably to all the rules of reasoning which we are capable of appreciating, we can see no possible way of reconciling the allotments and fortunes of human beings in this life with the principles of a righteous administration. Nothing can be more obvious to every candid, reflecting mind, than the fact that mankind are not rewarded and punished, in this world, "according to their works." The most wicked and abominable often occupy positions the most elevated and advantageous. They, in many instances, are comparatively free

from toil and care, tribulation and affliction, surrounded with splendor, and luxuriating in wealth and worldly pleasure; while the pious and the good, the amiable and the virtuous, are doomed to a life of toil and hardships, penury and want, affliction and suffering. Can this be reconciled with the justice and equity of God? Deny the righteous awards of a future judgment, and it is impossible. Even admit that, in many cases, even in this life, the virtuous, to some extent, share the reward of their merit, and the vicious are overtaken with condign punishment for their crimes, yet still, so long as there exists a solitary exception to this rule, the justice of God must look to an hereafter for the liquidation of her claims. While the history of the world mirrors to our gaze a Job or a Lazarus in affliction, a Bunyan in prison, a Christian martyr at the stake, or an innocent babe in the agonies of death, the justice of God must ever point the sufferer to his final reward in the future. A day of future reckoning is demanded, not only to furnish a reward for suffering innocence in this world, but also to mete out to the wicked the just punishment of their sins. What though a Haman may be "hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai;" what though a Herod may be "eaten of worms," yet, still, while there remains one instance of a fraud, an oppression, a slander, a murder, or a wrong in any shape, unpunished in this life, the sword of justice must still point to the judgment of the last day, where every secret sin shall be fully disclosed and duly punished.

2. That there will be a day of future judgment, may be argued from the power of *natural conscience*. In this way, "conscience does make cowards of us all." How can we account for the fact that the criminal is often made to tremble in communion with his own heart, with his own conscience and his God, when no human eye is upon him, and he has no particular ground to apprehend detection or punishment? Oft under such circumstances he trembles to be alone in the dark, and is made to carry a hell in his own bosom. What can produce this dread and horror, but the "fearful apprehension of fiery indignation" in a day of future reckoning?

We find this testimony of conscience everywhere, in both pagan and Christian lands. Its line has "gone out through all the earth," and its voice to "the ends of the world." This conscience, like a pursuing specter, has shaken its "gory locks" in the face of the assassin, and caused him to quake with fear in his secluded chamber; and it has planted the pillow of the guilty monarch with thorns. How can we account for this, but by admitting the fact that it is the "voice of God in man"—an implantation of his all-pervading Spirit? But are we to

conclude that God is mocking his creatures? that he has implanted this monitor, uselessly to "torment them before the time?" Why did that smiting of the knees so suddenly seize upon the voluptuous Chaldean monarch, when his eye traced the "handwriting upon the wall?" And why did wicked Felix "tremble," when he listened to the reasoning of St. Paul about a "judgment to come?" It was because this divinely-bestowed internal monitor pointed them to a day of future reckoning and punishment.

3. But the doctrine of a future general judgment is very explicitly *declared in the inspired word of God.*

In reference to a day of judgment, David says: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may *judge* his people." Ps. l. 3, 4. Solomon exclaims: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into *judgment.*" Eccl. xi. 9. And again: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. xii. 14. Daniel prophesies thus: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the *judgment* was set, and the books were opened." Dan. vii. 9, 10.

Our Saviour gives a particular account of the proceedings of the judgment-day in the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew. He commences with these words: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."

St. Paul says: "For we shall all stand before the *judgment-seat* of Christ." Rom. xiv. 10. Again: "Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will *judge* the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Acts xvii. 31. Again: "And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the *judgment.*' Heb. ix. 27.

St. John says: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were *judged* out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Rev. xx. 11, 12. Again: "And behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. xxii. 12.

The scriptures here quoted are ample to satisfy all who believe in the inspiration of the Bible, that at the termination of the present dispensation there will be a general judgment.

II. We next inquire concerning the *time* of this judgment—*when* will it take place?

1. No one, even of the inspired writers, has pretended to fix the precise date of this occurrence. How presumptuous, therefore, for uninspired mortals to attempt it! And how little short of blasphemy should all such assumptions be viewed, when it is remembered that our Saviour has declared that "of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Matt. xxiv. 36. Perfectly accordant with this position is also the declaration of St. Peter, that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." 2 Pet. iii. 10.

2. Some have supposed that the righteous will be raised from the dead and judged, at the commencement of Christ's millennial reign, and that then will take place what the Scriptures style the "first resurrection." But this view cannot be reconciled with the general tenor of Scripture on the subject, which represents the judgment as one grand connected process at the end of the world. It is "a day" which "God hath appointed"—"the day of judgment"—"the day of the Lord"—"the great and terrible day." All such scriptures are directly against the notion that there will be *two days* of judgment—the one for the righteous, and the other for the wicked, separated from each other by the lapse of thousands of years. The Scriptures evidently seem to place the judgment at the end of the world, immediately subsequent to the general resurrection.

Admitting, as many infer from the twentieth chapter of Revelation, that the martyrs will be *literally* raised from the dead, (a position which may well be doubted,) and will live and reign with Christ "the thousand years," still it by no means follows, either that all the righteous dead will then be raised, or that any portion of the general judgment will then take place.

3. It may be asked, *Why should the judgment be deferred till the end of the world?* Why might not each individual receive his final sentence at death, and enter at once on his eternal destiny?

To this it might be enough to reply, that the all-wise Judge has not so ordered it. But if we may be allowed to infer, from apparent fitness, the reasons of the divine conduct, we think there are several considerations which indicate the propriety of placing the judgment at the end of the world.

(1) *It will promote the declarative glory of God.* In the presence of an assembled universe, it will then be shown that "the Judge of all the earth will do right." The sentence of the Judge, whether for acquittal or condemnation, will then be sanctioned by the countless millions of angels and redeemed spirits.

(2) The fact that *the influence of human actions extends beyond the present life of the individual*, indicates the propriety of deferring the judgment till earthly things shall be no more. The example of both the good and the bad "lives after them." The influence of the example and writings of such men as St. Paul, Luther, Wesley, Baxter, Doddridge, Washington, and Wilberforce, will continue to bless the world to the latest generation. On the other hand, the influence of the example and writings of the wicked still remain to curse the world through successive generations. The pernicious writings of Hume, Bolingbroke, Rousseau, Voltaire, and Volney, are still in the world, exerting their influence over the destinies of immortal souls. It is reasonable, therefore, that the judgment be deferred till the end of the world. Then the entire actual influence of each individual can be more fully exhibited in the view of an intelligent universe, that all may witness that every man shall be rewarded "according as his work shall be."

III. *Important events to precede the general judgment.*

Nothing can be more certain than the *fact*, or more solemn and important than the *process*, of the general judgment. In portraying the scenes of the last day, many have drawn largely upon their imagination. It is, perhaps, but an insufficient apology for the freedom thus taken with a matter so solemn and important, that after the utmost efforts at description, all must fail to reach the fullness of the reality. Yet it must be admitted that, as all our knowledge upon this subject is derived from revelation, it is but a sober dictate of wisdom that we endeavor to learn all that God has seen proper to reveal concerning this matter, and then, forbearing to indulge in flights of imagination, see to it, that we secure a suitable preparation for that "great and terrible day."

1. The *preaching of the gospel to all the nations of the earth*, we are assured, must precede the general judgment. This fact we infer from our Saviour's words: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. xxiv. 14. We are aware that Dr. Clarke, and some modern critics, interpret the entire prediction in this chapter as referring exclusively to the destruction of Jerusalem. It cannot be denied that the passage does refer to that event; and, perhaps, such is its primary import. But it seems probable that this, like some other prophecies of Scripture, had a double sense, referring not only to the destruction of Jerusalem, but also to the end of the world—the former being typical of the latter. We have not room here to discuss this question particularly, nor is it a matter of importance in this connection. But when we remember the question proposed by the disciples, to which this discourse of our Saviour is a reply—"Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of *the end of the world?*" and when we remember, farther, that our Saviour also here used this language: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other"—when we remember these things, we cannot help believing that, not only the destruction of Jerusalem, but also the end of the world, is here the subject of prediction. Hence, before that "great day" shall come, the gospel message shall be delivered to all the nations of the earth, that all may receive, or reject, the great salvation.

2. The Bible predicts "signs and wonders" of solemn import, as *precursors* of the general judgment: "And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come." Acts ii. 19, 20. "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke xxi. 25–27.

3. The *manner of our Saviour's coming to judgment.* On this subject, also, we know only what has been revealed; but these Scripture

announcements are glowing and impressive. On this subject we read: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. iv. 16. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire." 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. "And ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Mark xiv. 62. "Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shal see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." Rev. i. 7. And once more: "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them." Rev. xx. 11.

Thus it appears that He who was once the "babe of Bethlehem," lying in the manger—He who was once the meek "Man of sorrows," having not "where to lay his head," will again descend to this lower world, not, as once, the helpless infant, the "despised and rejected of men," the insulted, buffeted, scourged, and crucified One, but as the "mighty God," the Sovereign of the universe, the "Judge of all men." He comes now, not to weep over Jerusalem; not to suffer hunger, and toil, and weariness; not to listen to the malignant cries of fiendish foes —"Away with him! Away with him!" but, seated upon a throne of glory more brilliant than ten thousand suns, to sway his judicial scepter over men and devils. If his rapt disciples were so transported with his glory on the mount of transfiguration, what will be the effect upon the gazing myriads of admiring saints, when they shall behold him coming with "ten thousand times ten thousand angels," encircled with his "great glory" upon the throne of judgment!

4. The next grand event ushering in the judgment process is, *the raising of the dead.* "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised." . . . "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." John v. 28, 29. "The dead, small and great, shall stand before God." How astonishing, how sublime, the scene! The awful trump of God, pouring its shrill tones louder and more terrific than ten thousand thunders, shall awake from their dusty slumbers the millions of earth's buried children. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," tombs burst, vaults open, marble piles are scattered, the dust stirs, "the earth casts out her dead," the sea gives up her sepulchered millions, death and the grave yield their prey, while countless angels collect the saints at the right hand of the Judge. But still the trumpet sounds; louder and more terrific waxes the awful peal; and now the wicked come forth—in countless throngs they leave their graves: covered with "shame and everlasting contempt," they lift the despairing wail—

"Mountains and rocks fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb! for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" But the resistless summons places them on the left hand of the Judge.

IV. *The solemn process and final issues of the judgment.*

1. Jesus, the Son of God, presides as the enthroned Judge. This fact the Scriptures plainly teach. Our Saviour declares: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son." John v. 22. St. Paul announces that Jesus "was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." Acts x. 42. And that God "hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." Acts xvii. 31. Various other scriptures assert the same doctrine.

The mediatorial work is emphatically the reign of Christ. By and through him the Father stoops in mercy to redeem his apostate creatures. Through him is given to all the tender of gospel salvation. And as all men, since the Fall, are held responsible, as probationers under the provisions of the new covenant, for the acceptance or rejection of eternal life, so all shall be summoned to account under the administration of that Mediator, for the manner in which they have treated the gospel call of reconciliation. The fact that Jesus Christ is to preside as final Judge in that "great and notable day," not only harmonizes with the principles of the mediatorial scheme, but is strikingly adapted to the condition of the persons to be judged. To the saints, what joyful assurance will be derived from the fact, that he whom they meet upon his throne of judgment is the same "compassionate High-priest" who "bore their sins in his own body on the tree!" On the other hand, with what guilt and shame must the rejecters of the gospel, the malignant foes, the foul blasphemers, and the wicked murderers of our Lord, be compelled to stand as criminals before the bar of him whom they have so scornfully rejected and derided! With what anguish shall they then "look upon him whom they have pierced!"

2. Before the judgment-seat shall stand *all men*—of all nations and all ages—the entire race of Adam. From the scrutiny of that fearful ordeal there is no possibility of escape. Not only mankind, but *devils* too, will there be judged; for God hath reserved them in "everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6. What imagination can conceive the magnitude of the throng, or the sublimity of the scene! The Judge sits enthroned, while he places the righteous on the right, and the wicked on the left; but with what different emotions do they await the solemn proceeding!

3. But by what *law*, or according to what *rule*, will the judgment be conducted?

The "books will be opened." Whether this will be literal or not, we do not know, nor need we inquire. One thing is certain: it will be a "righteous judgment." Men will be judged according to their privileges and opportunities — according to the light of the dispensation under which they have lived: the heathen, by the *law of nature;* the Jews, by the *law of Moses;* and Christian nations, by the *gospel.* There will be, as declared by St. Paul, "no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law. . . (For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another:) in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel." Rom. ii. 11–16.

4. What will be the *subject-matter* of adjudication? It will be no contest for literary fame or military glory, between ambitious aspirants. The pride of learning, the blandishments of place, the aristocracy of wealth, and the insignia of power, are all forgotten. Nothing is regarded but *moral* qualities. The only inquiry will be, Who is *good*, and who is *bad?* Who has lived according to the light of his dispensation, and who has "loved darkness rather than light, because his deeds were evil"? How different from the judgments of this world will be the estimate then placed upon all that now engages the minds, the hearts, and the pursuits of men! How worthless to the mighty conquerors will then appear the thrones to which they ascended, "with garments dripping wet with human gore!" What a sting will the memory of all his sensual gratifications then be to the abandoned voluptuary! What worthless trash, in the view of the sordid miser, will then be the golden pelf he now so stupidly adores! And what veriest trifles will then appear all those transitory things for which the immortal soul is now so willingly bartered! The "veil shall then be torn from the face of all nations." False colors will lose their attractions; and fictitious appearances will be converted into realities. Then vice will appear in all its naked deformity, and virtue in all her unfading charms.

In the investigations of that day, the entire field of moral conduct will be swept. Nothing in that department will be omitted. Every *act*, and *word*, and *thought*—all that comes under the head of moral

right or *wrong*—all that constitutes character morally *good* or *bad*—will be brought into view, and taken into the account. What an astonishing revealment of hidden things will then take place! What an exposure of midnight crime! What a mirror of lives! What an unfolding of hearts!

Some speculations, more curious than useful, have been put forth concerning the forms and details of the proceedings of the judgment. The question has been discussed: Will "books be opened" and used literally? To this we simply reply, We do not know. But this much is clearly implied: the process will be conducted with as much minute and detailed accuracy, as though every item were distinctly read off from a legible record. There will be no liability to omission or mistake.

Again, it has been asked, Will the past sins of the righteous, which had been forgiven in this world, be specifically exhibited before the judgment-seat? On the one hand, it is argued that they *will*, because it is written, "God shall bring *every work* into judgment, with *every secret thing*, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." On the other hand, it is contended that they *will not;* for God says, concerning them, "Their sins and iniquities will I *remember no more*." Whether the past sins of the righteous will be specifically exposed to public view in that immense crowd, or not, it is clearly inferable, from the general tenor of Scripture, that they will not be *so* exhibited as to mar the happiness of God's redeemed; but, on the contrary, the remembrance of them shall only increase their gratitude and felicity.

5. In conclusion, we notice the *final issues* of the judgment. These are set forth in the sentence to be pronounced.

The assembled race of Adam, with all the "angels which kept not their first estate," will then be standing before the bar of the inexorable Judge of all. Their entire history, as accountable agents, has been made manifest. Their probation has been closed forever. The reign of mercy, and the offer of pardon to the sinner, are over. The past is irretrievable. The future is now to be fixed by stern decree. The final destiny of all is now to be sealed. How solemn the moment! How pregnant with issues of the most awful import! The testimony is closed. Holy angels and redeemed saints have borne witness to the truthfulness of the presentation of character and conduct; and devils, and wicked men, bow their knees in confession of their guilt.

And now the Judge proceeds to announce the final awards. To those on his right hand he says: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." But to

those on his left hand he says: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

But the Scriptures inform us that at the great day of judgment *this earth shall be consumed by fire.* "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up." 2 Pet. iii. 10. The magnificence and awful grandeur of this scene—the passing away of the heavens, the melting of the elements, and the burning of the earth—we shall not attempt to portray. But this will be "the end of earth"—at least in its present state. The burning of the world is but the consuming of the hive from which the rising dead—a countless swarm—have just issued. It has filled its measure in the divine purpose. It has furnished a theater for sin's destructive sway, and death's appalling dominion, as well as for redemption's glorious achievements. But now the visible heavens and the earth shall be no more. But how infinitely more important than the material universe are the destinies of immortal intelligences! While we leave dissolving nature to perish by the action of the "flaming fire," let us pause a moment, and contemplate the departure of all from the solemn judgment of the last day.

Let us look at the import of the final sentence: "Depart from ME."—What! must they be driven from the presence of their God, the center and source of all bliss? "Ye cursed."—Not allowed to go alone! No; they must bear away upon their heads the burning curse of their Judge! "Into everlasting fire."—They must go into a place of most excruciating torment, where the action of the keenest element must prey forever upon their undying sensibilities. "Prepared for the devil and his angels."—The masters "to whom they have yielded themselves servants to obey"—fiends of darkness—are their only, their doomed, companions forever and ever! "But what shall be the funeral obsequies of a lost soul? Where shall we find the tears fit to be wept at such a spectacle? Or could we realize the calamity in all its extent, what tokens of commiseration or concern would be deemed equal to the occasion? Would it suffice for the sun to veil his light, and the moon her brightness? to cover the ocean with mourning, and the heavens with sackcloth? Or, were the whole fabric of nature to become animated and vocal, would it be possible for her to utter a groan too deep, or a cry too piercing, to express the magnitude and extent of such a catastrophe?" How tremendous, then, how overwhelmingly awful, must be

that sentence which shall consign to remediless ruin the millions of the damned!

But how far different the award of the righteous! "Come, ye blessed of my Father."—Approach near the Redeemer, and receive that blessing which God only can bestow. "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Your race is run—receive the prize. The battle has been fought, and the victory won—receive the crown, and enter the kingdom. And thus they leave the bar of judgment to enter the joys of their Lord on high, where they shall forever be with him, beholding his glory, and basking in the beams of his unbounded love.

"Lo! the heavenly spirit towers,
Like flames o'er nature's funeral pyre,
Triumphs in immortal powers,
And claps her wings of fire!"

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XLI.

QUESTION 1. What is the first argument offered to prove the certainty of the judgment?
2. How is it proved from natural conscience?
3. What are some of the Scripture proofs offered?
4. What two reasons are given for deferring the judgment till the end of the world?
5. What events are named as preceding the judgment?
6. What are its immediate precursors?
7. What solemn events are connected with our Saviour's appearance at judgment?
8. What scriptures prove that Jesus is to be the Judge?
9. Who will constitute the subjects to be judged?
10. By what law will they be judged?
11. What will be the subject-matter of adjudication?
12. What are the final issues of the judgment?

CHAPTER XLII.

FUTURE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED.

THE theme here proposed is not one of a pleasant character to the contemplation of the sympathetic Christian heart; yet it cannot be omitted in the presentation of a complete system of the doctrines of revelation. As the compassionate father, from solemn conviction of duty, must sometimes correct his wayward child, however disagreeable the task, so the teacher of religion must not only exhibit the consolations of the gospel, but also the denunciations of the law. He must not shun to "declare all the counsel of God."

In what will consist the future punishment of the wicked? And will it be eternal? These are the questions now to be considered.

I. *The* NATURE *of future punishment.*

Our information upon this subject must be derived solely from the language of Scripture. But it has long been debated whether these scriptures should be construed *literally* or *figuratively.* For aught that we can see, this controversy might still go on indefinitely, without any prospect of arriving at a certain conclusion. But of this much we may be assured: God cannot act deceptiously toward his creatures. In communicating his will, he cannot employ figurative language of stronger import than the reality. His attributes forbid the hypothesis. Hence, if, in portraying the future punishment of the wicked, he has used figures of speech, they cannot transcend the reality. On the contrary, we have reason to infer that the figures used on this subject are but dim shadows of the awful substance. As, in reference to the future happiness of the righteous, after all the glowing Bible descriptions on the subject, it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him;" so, as relates to the future punishment of the wicked, the rational inference is, that the strongest language and most striking figures must fail to impart an adequate conception of that cup of woe which is prepared for the finally impenitent.

The terms used to describe this punishment are as strong as language can furnish.

1. Future punishment implies *the direct infliction of pain by the action of a powerful external agency.*

The idea is clearly conveyed by such expressions as these: "Flaming fire," (2 Thess. i. 8,) "a furnace of fire," (Matt. xiii. 42,) "everlasting fire," (Matt. xviii. 8 and xxv. 41,) "the fire is not quenched," (Mark ix. 44,) "eternal fire," (Jude 7,) "the lake of fire," (Rev. xx. 15,) "the lake of fire and brimstone," (Rev. xx. 10.) Perhaps these terms are not to be understood in a strictly literal sense. But admitting that they are not, we cannot therefore infer that the punishment indicated will be any the less severe. Cannot the same God who created the substance of fire as it exists in our world, and who will raise the body from the grave with renewed and indestructible powers and susceptibilities, provide an agency for the punishment of the wicked—call that agency "fire," "fire and brimstone," a "lake of fire," or by what name we please—cannot *he* who made all things, create at a word an agency ten thousand times more powerful than the literal fire of this world, and perfectly adapted to impart to the undying nature of the sinner the most indescribable agony? The reasonable conclusion therefore is, that if the "fire" of future punishment is not literal, it will be vastly more intolerable. What language can depict, or what imagination conceive, the fullness of meaning implied in the phrase, to "dwell with devouring fire"—to "dwell with everlasting burnings!"

2. It implies *banishment to a place of outer darkness.*

The Scriptures declare that the wicked shall be "cast into outer darkness, (Matt. xxii. 13 and xxv. 30,) and that to them "the mist of darkness is reserved forever," (2 Pet. ii. 17,) and "the blackness of darkness forever." Let this darkness be understood literally, and it denotes a condition inexpressibly horrible. We have read of a darkness in Egypt so thick that it could "be felt;" we have tried to imagine the cloud of gloom that would soon envelop our world, if the light of the sun and every star were to be instantly and completely quenched; but how indescribably inadequate must be these illustrations to portray the horrors of that "outer darkness" into which the wicked will be driven, and by which they will be forever overwhelmed! But if this language of the Bible is but figurative, then we must conclude that the reality will be still more terrible. Suppose that instead of "darkness" we are to understand affliction, anguish, or tribulation, and that these, in their power to impart misery, will be increased in proportion to the enlarged susceptibilities of the immortalized faculties of human beings, how appalling the thought of that utter wretchedness into which the banished ones must be plunged!

3. It implies *a state of deep distress and anguish.*

This is indicated by such language as the following: "Their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched," (Mark ix. 44,) "there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth," (Matt. xiii. 15,) "the rich man lifted up his eyes in hell, being in torments;" and entreated Abraham, saying, "Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame;" (Luke xvi. 23, 24;) the wicked, it is said, "shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb," (Rev. xiv. 10.) Whatever may be the import of this language, or whatever may be the immediate source of their misery, it is certain the wicked will be doomed to suffer the most excruciating pain. There was distress and anguish when the old world "perished by water;" "lamentation and deep mourning" were heard in Ramah, when "Rachel wept for her children;" but what were these compared with that last, deeper, despairing wail, which shall one day come up from the pit, uttered by millions upon millions of burning tongues, sighing the ruin of millions upon millions of lost souls!

4. It is called the "*second death.*" Death, if it be a figure here, is one of the strongest that language can express. It imports the deepest suffering. But *here* is a "death that never dies." Not the mere dissolution of the body, which we have so often witnessed, and which, however protracted the suffering, however deep the breathing, however full of anguish the groanings, in a few hours is all over, and the spirit has "returned to God who gave it;" but a death which knows no termination; whose groanings will never cease; whose agonies will never end. How dreadful the thought!

5. This punishment implies *banishment from God, and all that is good.*

"Depart from ME," will be the fearful denunciation. To depart from all the sources of happiness in this world; from all the pleasures, all the riches, and all the honors, they have ever possessed or enjoyed; from all that is pleasing, or lovely, or desirable, which they have ever seen, or heard, or tasted; from all the good for which they have toiled or hoped—to depart from all these, were a dreadful calamity. But the sentence, "Depart from ME," includes all this, and infinitely more. It implies the loss of all good—the loss of all bliss. It is expulsion to those outer, those nether regions, where the light of the sun, or of the moon, or of the stars, never penetrates; where the beautiful scenes of nature, the flowers of spring, or the smile of friendship, shall never greet the eye; or the music of song, or the accents of love, fall on the ear. *All* is lost! Heaven is lost, with all its riches and grandeur!

The society of the holy angels and of the blood-washed saints is lost! The robes, the harps, the thrones, and the crowns of glory, are lost! God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are lost! The soul for which the Saviour died is lost!

6. It implies *the deepest remorse of conscience.*

If the justice of God can now implant in the guilty breast the scorpion-sting of conscience, with what increased fury will that conscience prey upon the guilty soul, when quickened, and illumed, and maddened, by the fires of the last day! The accusing voice of this dire tormenter, rising above the roar of the flames, and pouring its thunder tones upon every ear, shall pierce all hearts with anguish more pungent than could the bite of ten thousand scorpions; while the fearful apprehension of still deeper woe shall envenom the gnawings of the undying worm.

7. This punishment will include *the direct outpouring of the wrath of God.*

God the Saviour will then execute upon his enemies the fierceness of his wrath. The wicked will not only be driven away from God, but they shall be pursued by the sword of his avenging justice. They shall be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." God shall "speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." The Psalmist says of the wicked, God "shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath." Ps. lviii. 9. And "upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." Ps. xi. 6. St. Paul declares: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.

It is difficult to understand such scriptures otherwise than as implying the direct exertion of the divine power in the punishment of the wicked. What must be the fearfulness of that stroke which the energy of Omnipotence will then inflict! What bitterness must be in that cup of indignation which is poured by the hand of infinite Justice! "The thunder of his power who can understand?" What an aggravation to the torment of the wicked will it then be, to know that he whose avenging hand is upon them, is the One whom they willfully and wickedly insulted, derided, and rejected! But now he says: "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind." Lord help us to "flee from the wrath to come," that we may be prepared for "the great and the terrible day!"

II. *Will the punishment of the wicked be* ETERNAL?

On this subject, several different theories have been advocated in opposition to what we consider the plain truth of revelation. Though the shades of difference in sentiment among the abettors of these cognate systems of error are too numerous and unimportant to justify a distinct statement of each, yet they may all be comprised under four divisions.

1. *Materialism.*—This teaches that the soul is the result of the organism of the body, and can only exist in connection with it, and that consequently, when the body dies, the soul will cease to exist till it shall be restored with the body in the resurrection.

2. *Destructionism.*—This teaches that the punishment to which the wicked will be sentenced at the final judgment, will be *annihilation.*

3. *Universalism.*—This teaches that all punishment for sin is in this life, and that all men enter immediately into a state of endless happiness at death.

4. *Restorationism.*—This teaches that the wicked, after having been punished in a future state, for a limited period, in proportion to the number and magnitude of their sins, will be admitted into endless happiness

It will be perceived that the theory here called Restorationism, is but another phase of Universalism; but as the great body of Universalists hold to the third theory, as above presented, we have, for the sake of distinction, classed the Restorationists separately. We will also add, that some Universalists are likewise Materialists, holding to the sleep of the soul with the body in death till the resurrection. We likewise remark, that many who are regarded as Socinians, or Unitarians, agree substantially with Universalists in most of their distinctive views.

What we consider the Scripture doctrine on this subject, is this:

The souls of men, at the death of the body, will immediately enter into a state of happiness or misery, while the body will sleep in the grave till the resurrection, when soul and body will be reunited, and judged "according to the deeds done in the body," and then be admitted to endless happiness, or consigned to endless misery.

It will readily be seen that the establishment of this theory will necessarily be a complete refutation of all the heterodox views we have named. To enter upon this question, is really but little different from asking, Is the Bible true? So numerous and unequivocal are the Scripture proofs that the finally impenitent will be eternally punished hereafter for their sins in this life, that if we did not know the fact to the contrary, we would pronounce it impossible for any sane person.

believing in divine revelation, to dispute the position. But it is well known that there is a class of persons called Universalists, professing to be Christians, and to derive their creed from the Bible, who contend that all mankind are punished in this life according to the magnitude and number of their sins, and in consistency with the strict principles of retributive justice. Accordingly, they teach that the judgment of God is restricted to this life, and that every man suffers in this world the full penalty of his sins. The doctrine of a general judgment at the end of the world, and any punishment of the wicked, in a future state, they ridicule and deride.

1. *The Scriptures directly teach the endless punishment of the wicked.* These passages are numerous, but we will cite only a few, which we think direct and conclusive.

Our Saviour says: "It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands, or two feet, to be cast into *everlasting fire.*" Matt. xviii. 8. "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that *never shall be quenched;* where their *worm dieth not*, and *the fire is not quenched.*" Mark ix. 43, 44. Again, we read: "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up *forever and ever;* and they have *no rest day nor night.*" Rev. xiv. 11. "Who shall be punished with *everlasting destruction* from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe . . . in that day." 2 Thess. i. 9, 10. Here the apostle is speaking of the second coming of Christ. In that day, he informs us, all "that obey not the gospel" (and, of course, throughout all the period of the gospel dispensation) are then to "be punished." Is that punishment *in this life?* To ask the question is enough. If that be not punishment, to the great mass of gospel rejectors, *long after this life*, then there is no meaning in words. But if so, then Universalism is false. But what kind of punishment is this? How long will it endure? The Bible says, "*punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.*" It intimates no end to the punishment. Those thus sentenced can never be redeemed from hell, and brought into the enjoyment of happiness in the presence of the Lord in heaven. Their punishment is not only "everlasting," but it is "*from* the presence of the Lord."

St. Jude informs us that to the wicked "is reserved the blackness of darkness *forever.*" Jude 13. Again, we read: "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night

forever and ever." Rev. xx. 10. Again, our Lord says: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Matt. xii. 31, 32. St. Luke makes a similar record of the Saviour's words. In Mark, the language, if possible, is still stronger: "Verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." Mark iii. 28, 29.

According to the language of our Saviour, the sin against the Holy Ghost, here referred to, is absolutely *unpardonable.* Hence it is impossible that sinners of this class can escape from punishment, and enter heaven. They are doomed to eternal guilt; and the oath of God proclaims that he will "by no means clear the guilty." And this pollution of guilt which can never be washed away, will be an immovable barrier against their entrance into heaven; for our Saviour asserts that "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." The fact here declared, that the sin against the Holy Ghost can be forgiven "neither in this world, neither in the world to come," shows conclusively that the salvation of such is utterly hopeless, both for time and eternity; and consequently is an unanswerable refutation of the dogma of Universalism. Again, sinners of this class are said by our Lord to be "in danger of eternal damnation." The terms used, *αἰωνίου κρίσεως*, imply *judgment,* or *condemnation, of everlasting, or eternal duration;* hence all hope of salvation to this class of sinners must perish forever, and with it must perish the last vestige of Universalist delusion.

"Woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born." Matt. xxvi. 24. If all men go immediately into eternal happiness at death, (as Universalism teaches,) or if, after a limited period of suffering, they shall enter into an eternal state of happiness, (as Restorationists affirm,) how can it be said in truth concerning any man, "it had been good for that man if he had not been born?" Surely an *eternity of bliss* would more than counterbalance a limited period of suffering!

We present one passage more on this subject: "And these shall go away into *everlasting punishment;* but the righteous into *life eternal.*"

Matt. xxv. 46. It is utterly impossible, by any evasion or artifice, to set aside the proof contained in this passage, that the future punishment of the wicked will be *endless*. It is admitted by Universalism, in all its protean phases, that the happiness of the righteous will be *endless*. And this they have no difficulty whatever in proving by Scripture. But we confidently assert that the *eternal happiness* of the righteous is in no place in all the Bible more directly and conclusively set forth than in the passage before us. From the judgment of the last day, the righteous are to go "into life eternal." It is plain as any thing can be, that if this text affirms the *eternity* of future happiness, it also affirms the *eternity* of future punishment. That it affirms the former, Universalists are compelled to admit. That it proves the latter, they stubbornly deny. And yet it is obvious that the one is as plainly taught as the other. Indeed, Universalists, in contending that the happiness of the righteous will be *endless*, and denying the *endless punishment* of the wicked, do contradict themselves, and "prevaricate most pitifully." In the text under review, the same word is used in reference to the duration of the punishment of the wicked, and the happiness of the righteous. The word is *αἰώνιον*, in both instances, meaning *duration without end*. If the one is *endless*, so is the other. To contend otherwise, is not only to contradict the obvious meaning of the text, but to involve ourselves in the most ridiculous inconsistency and self-contradiction. We know it is contended that the terms rendered "eternal," "everlasting," "forever," and "forever and ever," are used in Scripture in reference to limited duration. But we reply, that in all such cases, the context and nature of the subject render the limited sense so apparent that there can be no danger of misapprehension. But in reference to the future punishment of the wicked, the context, the nature of the subject, and the entire tenor of Scripture, are obviously against the limited construction. Numerous other Scripture proofs of the endless duration of the future punishment of the wicked might be adduced, but more are needless. If the passages given do not, to our minds, establish conclusively the position, we would not "be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

2. *Serious difficulties pertaining to any theory which rejects the doctrine of the endless punishment of the wicked.*

The theory of materialism, which denies the conscious existence of the soul separate from the body, between death and the resurrection, having been sufficiently refuted in a preceding chapter, needs no farther notice in this connection.

The wild notion of annihilationism, or destructionism, will require

but a brief consideration. The abettors of this theory hold that the wicked, after the resurrection, will be sentenced to suffer the full penalty of their sins, but that their actual sufferings will be only temporary, after which, as the completion of the penalty, they shall be driven into total annihilation.

The first objection to this theory is, its utter inability to produce any support from Scripture. The second objection is, its antagonism to the principles of human philosophy, so far as these principles can bear upon a subject of this nature. For it is most certain that we have no evidence that the least particle of created substance, whether material or immaterial, has ever been annihilated since the original creative fiat called it into being. And it is very sure that no power short of Omnipotence can hurl back into nonentity any thing that God has made. Since, therefore, we have no evidence that God ever has annihilated any portion of his creation, and since no power but his own is capable of annihilating a single atom of existence, and since God has nowhere told us that he would ever exert his power in unmaking any thing he has made, therefore to suppose that he will ever annihilate the souls and bodies of a portion of mankind, is most unphilosophical.

That the term death ever means annihilation, is a position which cannot be proved. Indeed, to suppose that such is its import, would involve us in absurdity at every step, and reduce the Scriptures to senseless jargon. In reference, for instance, to the original penalty of the law, how absurd to suppose it to imply, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die"—(*be annihilated!*)

But the doctrine of annihilation is flatly contradictory to all those scriptures which speak of the punishment of the wicked as a state of endless *torment;* for surely the very conception of torment implies the existence of a conscious being to endure it.

But the largest class of those who reject the doctrine of the endless punishment of the wicked, are Universalists. Against the tenets of these, whether they be Restorationists, or Universalists proper, besides the Scripture proofs already presented, there are the following *weighty objections:*

(1) *Universalism is contrary to the whole Bible scheme of salvation through the mediatorial reign of Christ.*

An apostle has informed us that there is no way of salvation but through Christ. His words are: "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12. It is also clearly taught in Scripture that the offer of Christ through the gospel in this life is final:

and to such as reject him in this world, there is no hope. To them, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Heb. x. 26, 27. We are farther told that at the second coming of Christ, when he shall raise the dead and judge mankind at the end of this world, he will then "deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father;" and that, "when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Hence it is clearly set forth that the mediatorial reign of Christ will cease after the solemn events of the general judgment shall have transpired; and consequently, to such as reject his gospel here, there can be no salvation through him; and as there can be salvation in no other name, their case is forever hopeless. Universalism can furnish them no remedy.

(2) Universalism contradicts the great truth so abundantly taught in Scripture—that *salvation is conditional.*

Go where we will, to the Old Testament or the New, we find this *conditionality* staring us in the face. "*If* ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but *if* ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword." Isa. i. 19, 20. "He that *believeth* and *is baptized* shall be saved; but he that *believeth not* shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16. So we find it throughout the Bible. If salvation be not *conditional*, and if it be not true that some, by complying with these conditions, will be saved, and others, by refusing thus to comply, will be lost forever, then the Bible is a book of deception! and God has all along, from Genesis to Revelation, been endeavoring to frighten his creatures with mere bugbears—importuning them to *seek*, to *ask*, to *knock*, to *run*, to *strive* to enter into rest, when he knew all the while that all men were sure of salvation, whether they seek, ask, knock, run, strive, pray, believe, obey, or not! And yet this is Universalism! Shall we attribute such duplicity, such monstrous hypocrisy, to the Holy One? God forbid! Yea, "let God be true, and every man a liar!"

(3) Universalism overturns the whole scheme of salvation *through the amazing love and mercy of God.*

For if the platform of Universalism be sound, then all that we read of "God's great love of pity," in sending his Son into the world to die for sinners, is mere rhetorical flourish—worse, it is but ostentatious parade of pity, where no pity was needed; of grace and pardon, to such as could suffer nothing for the lack of either! For if Universalism be true, all must have been saved just as certainly without the advent, sufferings, death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ, yea, and the

gift and influences of the Holy Ghost, as with them. Universalism reduces all these sublime and glorious exhibitions of the love of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, to solemn nothings. For, according to the great corner-stone of that system, the attributes of God would forever forbid his punishing his creatures in another world for sins committed in this; and as to their sufferings here, these must be in exact accordance with the demands of justice, neither more nor less, on account of any thing Christ has done. According to this theory, there is no room for the forgiveness of sins; for all men must suffer the penalty due their sins in this life; and God is bound, in justice, to secure the eternal salvation of all, so soon as they leave this world.

According to this system, which teaches universal and unconditional salvation to all men, so soon as they enter upon the future state, whether they be good, or whether they be bad, then we may say: "Happy were ye, O ye wicked antediluvians! God mercifully rewarded you far above righteous Noah; for he sent the flood to release you kindly from all your sufferings, and to furnish you a triumphant passport to heaven, leaving that righteous man longer to buffet the storms!" "Happy, O ye inhabitants of Sodom! For God sent upon you a rain of fire and brimstone, but it was only that you might the sooner spread the glad wing of immortality, and mounting above the sulphureous blaze, enter the mansions of endless bliss!" Look, also, at the judgment of God on Ananias and Sapphira. They had committed the sin of lying to the Holy Ghost; but, according to Universalism, they are rewarded with an instantaneous transit from a world of trouble to the mansions of glory.

(4) Once more: Universalism *subverts the whole scheme of salvation.*

If, as Universalism teaches, the attributes of God will not admit of his punishing sinners in the future world for sins committed in this world, and if, as that theory farther teaches, all men are punished in this life for all the sins they commit, then, we demand, how can Christ save them from their sins, in any way whatever? He cannot save them from their sins *in this life*, for they suffer the full penalty they deserve, to the last jot and tittle. He cannot save them from *future* punishment, for of that they were never in any danger. From *what*, then, we ask, according to the teachings of Universalism, does Christ save the sinner? The only reply, so far as we can see, which the abettors of that theory can make, or which, so far as we know, they have ever pretended to make, to this question, is this: they allege that Christ saves the sinner from his sins, only by the influence of his teachings

and exan p.e in preventing him from committing sin. And this alone is all the salvation which that system has to offer the sinner. According to this, Christ is the Saviour of sinners in the same sense in which are Paul and Peter, and James and John, and Luther and Wesley, and Baxter and Whitefield, and every good man that ever lived. For all these have wielded a persuasive influence for good over the conduct of others.

Again, according to this notion, Christ does not save sinners fron their *actual sins* at all. He only saves them from the sins they have not committed, which, of course, cannot be *their* sins, till they actually commit them. Consequently he cannot, in any proper sense, save them from *their* sins at all. He only saves them from *imaginary* sins that never had an *actual* existence; consequently he is only an *imaginary* Saviour; and of infants, a Saviour in no sense!

The gospel speaks of the remission of sins *past*—"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of *sins that are past*, through the forbearance of God." Rom. iii. 25. But in what sense, according to Universalism, are past sins remitted, through faith in the blood of Christ? They cannot be remitted in the sense of release from punishment, either in this life or the next; for in this life they must suffer for them the full penalty of the law; and they were never in danger of being punished for them in the life to come. Nor can Christ save them from their sins in the sense of *prevention*, for they have actually taken place; so that we can see no possible way in which, according to the Universalist scheme, Christ can save sinners from their *past sins*. But as *this* salvation is plainly taught in Scripture, it follows that Universalism is subversive of the gospel plan of salvation from sin.

From all which it follows, that as Universalism, in all its phases, is contrary to the *express teachings of Scripture;* as it is inconsistent with the whole Bible scheme of *salvation through the mediatorial reign of Christ;* as it contradicts the great truth, so abundantly taught in Scripture, that *salvation is conditional;* as it overturns the whole scheme of salvation through the *amazing love and mercy of God;* and as it is subversive of the whole scheme of *salvation itself*—from all these considerations, we conclude that it is so directly antagonistic to the doctrines of Christ and his apostles, as to be essentially "another gospel;" and not that glorious system of salvation from sin through the atoning blood of Christ, received "through faith in his name." Hence, as all these kindred theories, antagonistic to the doctrine of the endless punishment of the wicked in a future state, are seen to be fallacious, we may safely

conclude that not only the justice, but all the attributes, of God, will harmonize in the sentence of endless punishment upon all who finally reject the offer of eternal life.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XLII.

QUESTION 1. Should the scriptures describing future punishment be construed *literally* or *figuratively?*

2. If figuratively, are the figures stronger than the reality?

3. What scriptures prove that future punishment implies the infliction of pain by an *external agency?*

4. What scriptures prove that it implies banishment to a place of *outer darkness?*

5. What scriptures prove that it implies a state of deep distress and anguish?

6. In what scripture is it called the *second death?*

7. What is implied in *banishment from God and all that is good?*

8. What scriptures prove that it implies the *outpouring of the wrath of God?*

9. What is the theory of Materialism? Of Destructionism? Of Universalism? Of Restorationism?

10. What is the *correct doctrine* on the subject?

11. What scriptures are adduced to prove it?

12. What objections are offered against the annihilation theory?

13. How is it shown that Universalism is contrary to the scheme of salvation through the *mediation of Christ?*

14. How is it proved that it is inconsistent with the *conditionality* of salvation?

15. How is it proved that it is contrary to salvation *through the love and mercy of God?*

16. How is it proved that it is inconsistent with the idea of salvation from *past sins*, or salvation *in any sense?*

CHAPTER XLIII.

FUTURE HAPPINESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

OUR most exalted conceptions of that felicity which awaits the people of God beyond the boundaries of time must be faint and inadequate. St. John says: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." 1 John iii. 2. St. Paul asserts: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." 1 Cor. ii. 9. On this subject the pen of inspiration hath used language the most glowing and impressive; yet the most vivid descriptions, and the most sublime metaphors of Holy Writ, are but feeble adumbrations of the ecstatic glories of the heavenly state. These representations furnish us no very definite information as to the *nature* of the heavenly felicity; yet they contain some vivid descriptions of its *sources*. Hence the most we can do on the subject, unless we launch forth on the sea of conjecture, is to consider these *sources* so far as they are revealed in the Bible.

I. *Character of the* FINAL HOME *of the saints.*

1. It is a *local habitation*, or a *place*. Some have supposed that the Bible descriptions of heaven are not intended to teach that the future home of the redeemed will be any particular locality or *place*, but merely a *state* of blessedness, having no reference to special locality; but this hypothesis is manifestly inconsistent with our Saviour's explicit teaching. He says: "In my Father's house are *many mansions:* if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a *place* for you. And if I go and prepare a *place* for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that *where* I am, *there* ye may be also." John xiv. 2, 3. The notion referred to is also contrary to the *prima facie* evidence and general tenor of Scripture. The Bible everywhere speaks of heaven, not only as a *state*, but also as a *place*. Angels are represented as *descending* from heaven to earth, and *ascending* again to heaven. The Son of man is said to have "come from heaven" to our world, and again to have "ascended into heaven, where he was before." Such expressions

as these, with which the Bible is replete, can only be consistently interpreted upon the supposition that heaven is a *place*.

Again, that heaven is a *place*, as well as a *state*, is demonstrated by the fact that it is now the abode of the glorified humanity of our Saviour, and will ultimately contain the risen bodies of all the saints. It is impossible for us to form any conception of a *body*, however refined, without locating it in some portion of space. That which is composed of a body cannot be omnipresent, and that which is not omnipresent, must exist in a particular located place. Hence it follows—as the bodies of all the redeemed are to be assembled together, in company with the glorified body of our Lord, "that where he is, there they may be also"—that the heavenly mansion in which they are thus to be assembled must be a *located habitation*.

We must not, however, infer that, because heaven is a *place*, it is not also a *state*. It is, doubtless, both the one and the other. However glorious the external habitation, it could be no heaven to the occupant without the proper condition of heart. In one sense of the word, wherever God dwells in the heart, manifesting his love and revealing his glory, there is heaven. In this sense it may be said, "The way to *heaven* is *heaven* all the way;" and the poet has said—

> "'Tis *heaven* to rest in thine embrace,
> And nowhere else but there."

Yet, as the Scriptures have plainly revealed the fact that heaven is a *place*, the admission that it is also a *state*, can have no tendency with the believer in revelation to weaken his confidence in the teachings of the Bible. That heaven is both a *place* and a *state*, implies no contradiction. The two positions are perfectly consistent with each other.

2. Heaven is a *glorious habitation*.

St. John, in his visions in Patmos, had a view of this habitation, which he describes as a magnificent city: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

He proceeds to describe the city, thus: "Her light was like unto a

stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal; and (the city) had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and the names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth four square, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it, are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man—that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved, shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he showed me a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of

the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever."

We are aware that some commentators understand all this magnificent description of the heavenly Jerusalem, in the last two chapters of Revelation, as referring to the prosperity of the gospel Church on earth. It perhaps does refer to the gospel Church in this world, in one sense—so far as *it* is a type of heavenly salvation and glory. Some expressions in the description seem clearly to require this interpretation. Such are the following: "The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." "And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it." It is difficult to see how these passages can refer to the heavenly state.

But there are other passages in the connection which admit of no consistent interpretation, if applied only to the Church on earth. It is said, "God shall wipe away all *tears* from their eyes; and there shall be no more *death*, neither *sorrow*, nor crying, neither shall there be any more *pain;* for the former things are passed away." Now it seems to us rather to pervert than to explain the inspired word, to assert that a state in which all *tears*, all *sorrow*, all *pain*, and all *death*, are to be done away, is to be expected this side the heavenly mansions. Again, into that city nothing *unholy* is to enter, but only "they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Can any thing like *this* be characteristic of the Church on earth? Once more: in that "holy Jerusalem" there is to be "no more curse"—there they shall *see the face* of the Lamb; there "they need no candle, neither light of the sun;" "and they shall reign forever and ever." If these descriptions do not refer to the heavenly state, then we may explain away every promise of the Bible, and destroy forever the hope of the Christian!

Dr. Clarke's comment on the scripture before us is somewhat remarkable. On the second verse of the twenty-first chapter, he says: "*New Jerusalem.*—This doubtless means the Christian Church in a state of great prosperity and purity." But, in commenting on the fourth verse, he applies the declaration, "there shall be no more death," to a state *subsequent* to the resurrection: thus passing with rapid facility from the Church on earth to the Church in heaven.

The true interpretation of the three concluding chapters of Revelation, we think to be this: In the preceding part of Revelation a prophetic sketch had been given of the history of the Church to the commencement of Christ's millennial reign. In the last three chapters the millennial reign of Christ, the solemn events of the resurrection, the general judgment, and the glories of the future state, are depicted. As

the millennial reign of Christ with his saints on earth will precede, and is typical of, his triumphant reign with them in the heavenly state, and as some things connected with this description of "the holy city, New Jerusalem," apply more properly to the millennial state of the Church, and some can only apply to the heavenly state, the most rational inference is, that both these states are included.

The burden of this description unquestionably relates to the heavenly state; yet, as both the millennial and heavenly glory are connected with the mediatorial reign of Christ, the one unfolding its greatest triumphs in this world and the other revealing its final issues in the world to come, it is but natural that the description of both should be somewhat blended. The triumphs of Christ's mediatorial reign on earth, and its rewards in heaven, are, in an important sense, *one*. The saints on earth and the saints in glory are all the purchase of his blood. And as "the kings and nations of the earth" shall "bring their glory and honor" into the Church militant, denoting its great prosperity in this world, so "the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light" of the "holy Jerusalem" above, where the light of sun and moon will never be needed, and where sin and sorrow, pain and death, can never enter.

In an important sense, it is the same "holy Jerusalem," whether here on earth in her militant state, battling with tempest and storm, and fleeing to caves and dens of the earth from the rage of persecution, or in heaven, where the saints, having, like their Master, been "made perfect through suffering," and having "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, shall be saved from sin and all its consequences "forever and ever." *Here* they oft have no certain dwelling-place, being "strangers and pilgrims on earth," but *there* they shall inherit "many mansions" in that "holy city" whose twelve foundations are garnished with chrysolite, beryl, topaz, amethyst, and all manner of precious stones; whose gates are of pearl; whose streets are gold, transparent as glass; and whose walls are of jasper.

But the question is often asked: Are these descriptions *figurative*, or are they *literal*? It is generally assumed that they are *figurative*. Perhaps they are. But we dare not affirm that they are entirely so. The human body, in the resurrection, will be the identical body that we have here; yet it will be changed into a "spiritual body;" it will be "fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body:" even so, for aught we know, when the "new heaven and the new earth" shall be created, God may produce new substances of gold and precious stones, so refined and spiritualized, that they will as far transcend those metals, as known on

earth, as will the spiritual bodies of the saints the "vile bodies" they now possess. And if this be correct, (and who can say that it is not?) then the descriptions here given of the magnificent city which shall be the final habitation of the people of God may be different from the literal acceptation only in so far as the spiritual gold and precious stones, and rivers, and trees, of the celestial world, shall excel in beauty, magnificence, and purity, those substances of earth; just as the vile body of the saint on earth shall be excelled by that body which shall rise from the tomb, with all the undying energies and unfading beauties of immortality. But if we conclude that these descriptions are entirely figurative, then we are bound to infer that all these glowing descriptions must come far short of imparting a full conception of the glorious reality.

But in what part of God's vast universe is the heavenly abode of the saints located? On this question, God has not seen proper to gratify the curiosity of man. The general Scripture presentation is, that heaven is far above us. But what meaning shall we attach to the term "above" in this connection? In reference to our own planet, *down* means toward the earth's center, and *up* means in the opposite direction. Thus, to our antipodes, *up* and *down* are the very opposite of what they are to us. Hence, so far as such terms are controlled in their import by the earth's attraction, they can impart no light as to the location of heaven.

Another point fully expressed in Scripture is, that heaven is immensely distant from us. God says: "I dwell in the *high* and holy place." Isa. lvii. 15. "As the heaven is *high* above the earth." Ps. ciii. 11. "The heaven for *height* . . . is unsearchable." Prov. xxv. iii. St. Paul speaks of Christ having "ascended up *far above all heavens*"—that is, beyond the bounds of sun, moon, and stars—all the visible heavens. Hence the Scriptures teach, first, that heaven is *above us;* and, secondly, that it is *beyond the bounds of the visible heavens.*

Astronomy teaches that our system, of which the sun is the center, is but one of an almost infinite number of systems scattered through the immensity of space; that each fixed star is a sun and center to a system perhaps as extended as ours; and that, far beyond the reach of the strongest telescope, suns and systems innumerable shine forth under the eye and control of the Eternal. Now, the "heaven of heavens"—the throne of God, and the eternal abode of holy angels, and of the redeemed saints—must be *above* all these visible heavens and systems of worlds. Far, far beyond the bounds of those orbs on which the astronomer of earth may gaze, in the grand center of light and per-

fection, in an atmosphere purer and more spiritual than ever surrounded globe or world, is, doubtless, the lofty pavilion of God. Here, in the far-off center of the universe, as the great, *great* central point, we may suppose is the throne of God. Here, amid surrounding worlds, and systems, and *nebulæ*, the great Creator of all sits upon his throne, "high and lifted up," wheeling the spheres in their orbits, and swaying his scepter over innumerable worlds of intelligent beings. And here, in a manner to us incomprehensible, he is "over all, God blessed forever." And here is that glorious and eternal habitation where the Son shares with the Father "the glory which he had with him before the world was;" and *here*, also, is the blessed home of "the saints in light," where they shall dwell with the Saviour, beholding his glory forevermore.

II. The saints in heaven will have been *saved from all evil.*

1. From all *intellectual evil of ignorance.* We are not, however, to understand that they are to be absolutely perfect in knowledge. This belongs to God alone. But they shall not be conscious of any such defect in knowledge as would interrupt their happiness. And, doubtless, the pursuit of knowledge, unimpeded by the clogs of mortality, will constitute a part of the employment, and greatly contribute to the happiness, of the "spirits of just men made perfect." This, we think, is more than intimated by the apostle, when he says: "We know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." From this language we gather the pleasing hope, that when the last accession of truth is made here on earth, we are not to die and leave it all behind, but it shall accompany us to the future world; and where the pursuit has been dropped here, for the want of time or ability to conduct it farther, it shall be resumed there with renewed and immortalized powers; where the body will not weary, nor the powers of the mind wax feeble, but where all our faculties shall bloom in the freshness of immortal youth, and ripen forever under the beams of heavenly illumination.

2. The *moral evil of sin* shall not enter heaven. Nothing unholy can enter there to disturb the peace of the saints. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest." Job iii. 17. Sin has caused all the evil in the world. The saints of the most high God, however pure and holy in heart and life themselves, in all ages, have been annoyed by the wickedness of those around them. Righteous Lot was "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked" inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. In this world of sin, the faithful have ever "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bonds

and imprisonment;" they have been "stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain with the sword; they have wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented." But in heaven the tongue of slander, or of profanity, shall never be heard; the rumor of outrage, of wrong, of oppression, or of war, shall never pain the ear, the sword of persecution shall never drink the blood of the saints, nor shall they any more be "killed all the day long, or accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

3. In heaven, the *penal consequences of sin—weariness, toil, affliction, pain,* and *death*—will be unknown. In Isa. xxxv. 10, we read: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." In reference to the redeemed, it is written: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. . . . They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. xxi. 3, 4: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

III. In the heavenly state, the ASSOCIATIONS of the saints will be a source of unspeakable happiness.

1. *Angels will be their familiar companions.* "But ye are come," saith the apostle, "unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an *innumerable company of angels,* to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Heb. xii. 22, 23.

2. They will share the *society of the pious of all ages and all countries.* There they "shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. viii. 11. They shall hold converse with "prophets and righteous men" of olden time. They shall listen to the orations of Enoch and Elijah, of Abraham and Job, of Moses and Samuel, of David and Isaiah, of Daniel and Ezekiel, of Peter and James, of Paul and John. If a few moments on Mount Tabor, where Moses and Elijah talked with Jesus, so entranced the apostles, with what thrilling emotions must

the souls of the redeemed be inspired, when on the eternal mount on high they shall listen to the sublime strains in which so many eloquent and immortal tongues shall comment on the stupendous wonders of redemption!

3. But the saints in that glorified state shall mingle with *all their loved ones of earth who have died in the faith.*

But will those who have been acquainted in this world recognize each other in heaven? The plain inference from Scripture is, that they will. "Then shall I know," saith the apostle, "even as also I am known." 1 Cor. xiii. 12. The supposition, that in heaven we will know less than we do in this world, is contrary to the tenor of Scripture. Even the rich man in hell recognized "Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." Indeed, the inference from the Bible is, that in the heavenly state, by an intuitive perception, of which we can here form no idea, we shall even recognize those whom we have never seen in the flesh. Not only did the rich man referred to recognize Abraham and Lazarus, but the apostles, on the mount of transfiguration, recognized Moses and Elijah, whom they had never before seen. Surely, then, although "in heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage"—domestic relations not being there perpetuated—yet, "when that which is perfect is come," and "that which is in part shall be done away," then our knowledge shall be wonderfully increased. And how must it swell the hearts of dearest kindred, and "true yoke-fellows" in the "kingdom and patience of Jesus," to hail each other happy in that bright world of bliss and glory!

How must the heart of Jacob have exulted with joy when he once more met his beloved Joseph, for whom he had mourned as dead! After the long, fond embrace, was over, "Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive." And what ineffable joy must have filled the heart of the father of the prodigal son, when he met him after his return, and, falling on his neck, kissed him! But what are these instances of emotion compared with the reunion of nearest and dearest relatives and friends in the vast assemblage around the throne!

4. But, above all, *Jesus himself will be there,* known unto all his redeemed. There shall they "see him as he is," in all the splendor of his glorified humanity. Without a dimming veil, they shall "see the King in his beauty," and, casting their crowns before the throne, they shall lift the voice of praise, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

IV. Another *source of happiness* in heaven, will be the EMPLOYMENT **of the saints.** Of this, our largest conceptions must be imperfect.

1. One important exercise will be the *worship* of God and the Lamb. Long ago, St. John had a vision of the heavenly worshipers. He heard them crying out, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come," and giving "honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth forever and ever." He heard the "four and twenty elders" singing before the throne a "new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests;" and joining the swelling strain, he heard the voice of many angels—the number of them being "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard he saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever." And again, he saw "a hundred and forty and four thousand," with the "Father's name written in their foreheads:" he "heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps;" and they sung "a new song," which "no man could learn" but "the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth." (Rev.) Such are some of the Bible pictures of the worship performed in heaven. In this, the company of the redeemed will participate.

2. But we may rationally infer that there will be a pleasing variety in the employment of the saints in glory. Another interesting part of the exercise will be, *to behold and admire the glories of heaven.* Jesus said: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that *they may behold my glory.*" What sublime revelations will *there* be made of the unutterable glory of the Redeemer! *There* may be learned some of those things which St. Paul referred to as unlawful to be uttered on earth. But the Lamb shall lead his ransomed millions over all the celestial fields of immortality, and unfold to their vision the riches and glory of his eternal kingdom.

Nor are we to suppose that the saints will be restricted to the precincts of the heavenly mansions. As the vast universe is the dominion of Christ, "all things" being "made by him, and for him," so we may infer, that as the holy angels now "desire to look into" the redeeming

work of Christ on earth, so will the glorified saints be interested throughout all the dominions of God. The study of the divine administration throughout distant worlds, as well as the ever-unfolding glory of God in redemption's wondrous plan, will be enough to employ the thoughts, to warm the hearts, and to swell the joys, of the saints forever and ever.

V. *Character and degree of their enjoyment.*

In the present mode of our being, we can have but a faint conception of that capacity for enjoyment which our immortalized natures will possess. If the change upon the mental is to equal that upon the bodily powers, and the glorified body of the Redeemer is the model after which the bodies of the saints are to be fashioned, how wonderful must be the capacity for enjoyment possessed by the saints in glory! With a spiritual body, how keen and far-reaching must be the glance of the eye, how delicate and appreciative the faculty for hearing, how exquisite the powers of taste, how capacious the intellect restored from the curse of sin, how enlarged must be the capacity for deriving happiness from all that can attract the eye or charm the ear, illume the mind or delight the fancy, kindle the imagination or enrapture the affections! And we may rationally indulge the pleasing hope, that all these capacious powers, as the cycles of eternity shall roll, will be ever enlarging and ever increasing in their capacity for imparting to the undying nature, still sweeter, richer, purer streams of bliss.

The crowning excellency in the bliss of heaven is, that it shall *fear no termination.* On earth, how quickly the most attractive beauty fades, the sweetest pleasure dies, and the fondest hopes are withered; but in heaven, the sun of peace, and joy, and love, and bliss, shall never set. Spring shall bloom with unfading beauty, love shall glow with increasing warmth, and the stream of bliss shall flow forever.

We have only glanced at a few of the "exceeding great and precious promises" of God, in reference to the future happiness of the saints. But how little do we know upon that subject! That it will be a state of bliss beyond the power of language to describe, none can doubt. The Bible, as we have seen, uses the most striking figures to describe it; but, at the same time, most clearly intimates that the subject is "too wonderful" for our conception. But, for the encouragement of our faith and hope, we may be assured that when "death shall be swallowed up of life," the saints will be possessed of all that is essential to their happiness. They shall dwell amid "pleasures forevermore." Free from sorrow and death, they shall mingle with the celestial throng around the throne of the Eternal. And while the pure light of heaven shall pour upon their immortal intellects, they shall feast forever upon the

sublime mysteries of providence and grace, and kindle with holy rapture as they contemplate the unfolding perfections of Him "who is above all, and through all, and in them all."

"There shall they muse amid the starry glow,
Or hear the fiery streams of glory flow;
Or, on the living cars of lightning driven,
Triumphant, wheel around the plains of heaven."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XLIII.

QUESTION 1. How is it proved that heaven is a *place*, as well as a *state?*

2. How is it proved that St. John, in Revelation, in describing the "holy Jerusalem," *referred to heaven?*

3. Are his descriptions *figurative* or *literal?*

4. From what *evils* will the saints in heaven be delivered?

5. What *associations* will conduce to their happiness?

6. What *employments* in heaven will promote their happiness?

7. What will be the *character* and *degree* of their enjoyment?

PART II.—EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK I.—PREPARATORY EVIDENCE

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION — IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT, AND METHOD OF INVESTIGATION.

"I can scarcely think any pains misspent that brings me solid evidence of the great truth, that the Scripture is the word of God, which is, indeed, the great Fundamental."—BOYLE.

IS CHRISTIANITY TRUE, OR IS IT NOT? However this question may be decided, it must be acknowledged by every reflecting mind that it is an inquiry of the greatest importance. If it be *true*, it involves consequences in comparison with which all things else dwindle into insignificance. Upon it depends the weal or woe of every accountable intelligence of the human race, and that not only in this life, but for an endless eternity to come.

If this assumption be correct, which we think none can doubt, it necessarily follows that no intelligent person can refuse or neglect to bestow upon this great question a careful and serious consideration. To ignore or pass by this subject, without calm and honest investigation, is to act the part of folly and madness. While there is even a possibility that Christianity may be true, it is blindness to our most important interests to fail to use all the means in our power to arrive at a satisfactory and correct conclusion on the question.

"Truth is mighty, and will prevail." No principle is more general in virtuous minds than the love of truth. It is the object of the philosopher's most earnest search, and of the Christian's warmest admiration. All sects and parties, whether in philosophy, science, politics, or religion,

claim to have truth on their side, and do homage at her shrine. But in no department of knowledge does the importance of truth become so truly great, as in reference to religion. As one has expressed it: "If revelation be true, it is tremendously true;" but if it be *false*, it is a gross and unmitigated falsehood—a wicked imposition!

In the investigation of truth on this, as on all other subjects, we must begin with first principles, and reason upward from what we *know* to what we do *not* know. Aside from supernatural or divine influence, all our knowledge must be derived through the medium of external sensation or internal consciousness. By the former, we know that we have material bodies, and are surrounded by material objects, and no reasoning can strengthen or weaken our conviction on the subject. By the latter, we know when we love or hate, are joyful or angry, happy or miserable, and no reasoning can change these convictions.

In discussing the claims of Christianity, we propose to begin with such first principles, self-evident truths, or obvious axioms, as none can question without renouncing the dictates of common sense, and then to argue upward from one truth to another, as the several links appear to hang together in a connected chain.

Truth itself is a grand harmonious system, the parts of which, like a seamless garment, constitute one united whole, and can only be separated by violence. As in mathematical science, the certainty of the solution of a problem is only apparent after the several parts of the demonstration have been viewed in their separate state, and their necessary dependence and connection clearly seen; so, in examining the evidences of Christianity, by beginning at the foundation with first principles and admitted truths, and tracing the argument with patience and care through its various stages, we shall be conducted, if not to absolute mathematical certainty, leaving all doubt impossible, at least to a clear, firm, and satisfactory conviction, leaving all doubt unreasonable and criminal.

The evidences of Christianity is a subject exhaustless in its nature From the earliest ages of the Christian Church to the present period, it has employed the pens of many of the ripest scholars and most profound reasoners, who have bequeathed to the world and the Church numerous unanswerable treatises in defense of divine revelation. But these writers, while they have occupied similar ground in regard to the main arguments, have generally varied in their mode of presenting them. Some have attached most importance to one class of arguments, and some to another. Some have relied mainly on what are termed the *external* evidences, and others on the *internal*. Perhaps no two authors

have presented precisely the same arguments; and certainly no one ever pretended that he had exhausted the theme. Indeed, Christianity is a great subject around which cluster an almost infinite number and variety of proofs. Arguments in its favor, and many of them of great force, may be drawn from almost every page of the Bible, as well as from every chapter in the history of the world and of the Church, and from every day's experience of every saint and of every sinner. The developments of each revolving day, by the presentation of accumulating evidence of the conformity of the character and wants of man to the statements of the Bible, and of the continued fulfillment of prophecy, but add to the ever-swelling amount of testimony, that *Christianity is true.* Hence it is obvious, notwithstanding the much that has been written upon the subject, that all the evidences of Christianity have never been presented.

While it is true that the range of argument on this subject is so vastly extensive, it must also be admitted that the leading evidences of Christianity are essentially the same in all the treatises of our numerous and able authors. Therefore but little, in this department, can now be presented entirely new. But while the leading argument is substantially the same in all, there is something in the style and manner of each writer variant from that of all others; and this diversity may serve a valuable purpose. The phase in which an argument is presented will not strike all readers in the same way. An argument, as exhibited by one writer, may to many persons seem of little force, while the identical argument, presented in the form and dress peculiar to another author, may appear very conclusive and satisfactory.

In the following pages, we do not propose a complete exhibition of every thing pertaining to the evidences of Christianity, for the subject is so extensive that, instead of a single treatise, volumes would be required to present it fully in all its departments and phases. What we aim to accomplish is, to furnish a clear, comprehensive, and concise view of the leading arguments on the subject, in a form no less comprehensive and satisfactory than the treatises heretofore published, yet more simple and perspicuous, and better adapted to the comprehension, and more impressive upon the memory of young persons and ordinary readers. Our object is, as far as possible, to free the subject from intricacy and perplexity, and render its examination not only an instructive but a pleasing exercise. In a word, our great aim is so to portray the important and staple evidences of Christianity that they may be easily and clearly comprehended, duly and fully appreciated, and forcibly impressed upon the memory and the heart.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER I.

QUESTION 1. What is the great question proposed, and whence arises its paramount importance?

2. Whence is all our knowledge derived?

3. What general method is proposed in discussing the subject?

4. What kind of conclusions may we arrive at in examining the evidences of Christianity?

5 Is the subject susceptible of being exhausted?

6 To what extent, and by what kind of authors, has it been treated?

7. Have all these authors pursued the same plan, or relied mostly on the same class of arguments?

8. From what great sources may the proofs be derived?

9. Have our leading authors been agreed as to the most important arguments?

10. In what sense do they mainly differ in their writings?

11. What does the author aim to accomplish in this investigation?

CHAPTER II.

REVELATION NECESSARY TO THE KNOWLEDGE AND WORSHIP OF GOD.

THE evidences of Christianity may all be properly considered as either *preparatory* or *direct*.

We commence with what we term PREPARATORY EVIDENCE.

This, by some authors, has been considered as partly *presumptive* evidence, and partly *preliminary*. But we prefer to embrace both these under the more comprehensive term of *preparatory;* for it is certain that neither the evidence called "presumptive" nor that styled "preliminaries" amounts in itself to a *proof* of the truth of Christianity; but it prepares the way for the comprehension and appreciation of that proof: hence it is properly *preparatory evidence.*

By a divine revelation, we understand, in general terms, a supernatural communication from God to man of truths not taught by nature, and which could not be learned by the mere exercise of reason. This will embrace all divine communications, whether directly from God himself to the individual, or through the medium of an angel, or some person or persons commissioned from God to make known his will to others, accompanying the communication with satisfactory evidence of their authority. Or, secondly, by divine revelation we understand the things contained in the Bible, or the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

Before entering upon the discussion of this subject, we premise a few remarks on the province of *reason*, in connection with revelation. There is danger of error here, in two opposite extremes: in its prerogatives, reason may be either too much circumscribed or too far extended. It is certainly not only our privilege, but our duty, to exert to their utmost capacity our reasoning faculties, in investigating the evidences of Christianity. As it is all-important for us to know whether God has given us a revelation or not, and as it is by the use of reason alone that we can satisfy our own minds on this question, we are culpable, if we fail to use our utmost efforts of reason, in the investigation.

Again, when fully satisfied that God has furnished us a revelation of his will, we should then exercise all our reasoning powers, availing

ourselves of all accessible helps to gain a correct understanding of the meaning of that revelation, that we may know *what* has been revealed. But when once satisfied that God has spoken, and that we know *what* he has spoken, *reason* must then submissively bow to *faith;* and we must rely on God's word as true, whether we comprehend all its mysteries or not. But we have the consolation to feel assured that, though many things in revelation are mysteries, and too profound for human reason to comprehend, yet there is nothing in the whole compass of God's revelation that is repugnant to the principles of sound reason. Apparent discrepancies between divine revelation and human reason, in the very nature of things, must result alone from the fact that our faculties are limited and imperfect, and consequently are sometimes unable to penetrate so profoundly, or to soar so loftily, as to perceive the perfect consistency of sound reason with the sublime revelations of Heaven.

In entering upon the discussion of the evidences of Christianity, the Christian occupies obvious vantage-ground. The *prima facie* evidence is in favor of revelation. This appears, not only from the great antiquity of the Scriptures, and the sanction given them by various portions of the world in different ages, but from the character and condition of man—his moral agency and accountability; his utter destitution of a proper knowledge of the being and attributes of God; and of his own origin, duty, and destiny.

We plant ourselves in the outset upon the universally-admitted, if not self-evident, truth, that man is a *moral agent.* In proof of this position, an appeal to the internal consciousness of every candid mind ought to be sufficient. Who that has arrived at the age of accountability and discretion, and has seriously reflected on the subject, can for a moment doubt the fact that there is a distinction between *right* and *wrong*, and that he is capable of doing the one and the other? It matters not, so far as our present purpose is concerned, nor will we stop here to inquire how this knowledge of good and evil, or consciousness of right and wrong, is derived. Whether it be an innate principle originally planted in the constitution of our nature, "growing with our growth, and strengthening with our strength," or whether it be a direct infusion from the Divine Being, it matters not in this investigation. We assume it as an incontrovertible truth, that every one endued with rational powers has this internal consciousness of his moral agency. He feels and knows that he can do *right* and *wrong*, as he may determine in his own mind. He may bewilder his intellect by vain philosophical speculations, but, while reason and common sense occupy the throne of his mind, he never can shake off this settled conviction

The moral agency of man is farther evident from the history of the world. All men in all nations have terms expressive of approbation or blame, which they invariably use, not only in reference to their own actions, but the actions of others, indicating clearly a sense of guilt when they do wrong, or of innocence when they do right; or censure, or approval, in reference to others, accordingly as *they* may do right or wrong. If man be not a moral agent, capable of performing both good and bad actions, it follows that the God of providence has led all nations into the belief of a monstrous delusion; and that the God of nature has planted or infused into the mind of every individual this delusion, from which it is inpossible for any to escape.

If man be a moral agent, which, we think, must be admitted, then we ask: Has he by nature, or can he acquire by his natural faculties, that knowledge of God and his perfections necessary to the performance of the functions of a moral agent? In this investigation we have nothing to do with the atheist. We assume the existence of God, and address our argument solely to the deist, or such as admit the existence and perfections of a great Supreme.

Admitting, then, that God exists—that he is possessed of those perfections that even the deist ascribes to him, and that he is our creator and preserver—how can we, without divine revelation, gain that knowledge of God which we indispensably need to qualify us for acting our part as moral agents? We find the entire pagan world, even the Greeks and Romans, and all the most refined portions of them, in the boasted Augustan age of literature and intelligence, immersed in superstition and idolatry. Socrates, Plato, Cicero, and a few individuals of the wisest and best among them, may, to some extent, have arisen above the masses of the people, and so far burst the shackles that bound them in darkness as to gain a glimpse of the true light. They had clearer and more elevated views of the Deity and his perfections than their fellows. But even *they* were shrouded in darkness, and gloom, and doubts. They were tossed upon the sea of conjecture; and even Socrates and Plato, the wisest of them, expressed their despair of arriving at a satisfactory knowledge of God, and of their own duty and destiny, till "some one should come from God to instruct them." But the degree of light they possessed is rather to be traced by tradition to original revelation than attributed to the efforts of their own unassisted reason.

But admitting all that may be claimed in behalf of a few learned philosophers, this will not weaken the argument in reference to the great masses—the millions of the pagan world. What has ever been.

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and is still, their condition? In reference to God and religion, they are sitting in darkness, and dwelling in the region and shadow of death. They are blind as the bat, and stupid as the ass. "Because, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God; they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." "They changed the truth of God into a lie," and bowed down in worship "to four-footed beasts and creeping things, to stocks and stones," to onions and leeks, and snakes and crocodiles. Were not all these multiplied millions of idolaters moral, accountable agents? Did not they owe allegiance and worship to the God that made and preserved them? And how are they to obtain an adequate knowledge of that God of whose very existence they are ignorant? And not knowing God—having not the faintest conception of his attributes—how can they render him that homage and worship which are his due, and which their duty demands?

The ignorance of the pagans, in reference to the divine attributes, is obvious from the very nature of their idolatrous worship. They knew nothing of the divine *unity*, for they worshiped "gods many, and lords many." The Greeks had thirty thousand divinities, and the Hindoos three hundred and thirty millions. They understood not the divine *omnipresence*, for they had patron deities for every country, city, town, hamlet, grove, river, and fountain, and partitioned out the government of the world to a multitudinous family of divinities. Their worship implies that they had no conception of the idea that the same god could preside, or be present, in different and distant parts of the earth at the same time.

They knew as little of the divine *omnipotence;* for they never dreamed that the god of the Philistines could exert his power over the Israelites, or that the presiding divinities of Egypt could sway their scepter over Greece or Rome.

They never conceived the thought of the divine *holiness;* for to their divinities they attributed all manner of vice and impurity. Deceit and treachery, cruelty and revenge, drunkenness and debauchery, theft and robbery, rapine and murder—*these* were the virtues celebrated in heathen temples—these were the characteristics of the divinities at whose shrine they worshiped and adored. They were strangers to the divine *goodness*, *love*, and *mercy;* for they represented their divinities as capricious, jealous, and revengeful: evil *genii*, delighting in mischief and destruction, swelled the register of their mythology.

As among all nations, and in all religions, the attributes ascribed to the divinity, or divinities, worshiped, constitute the standard of perfection, and present the model after which the character and lives of the

devout will be shaped, what can we reasonably expect from the stupid pagans, so grossly ignorant of God and his attributes? Where the mind is so shrouded in darkness, will not the heart and the life be steeped in degradation and misery? Do these pagans possess that information concerning God which their character as moral agents demands?

From the entire history of the pagan world, is it reasonable to suppose that, without divine revelation, they ever could gain a qualification for acting with propriety their part, as free, moral, and accountable agents? If, then, God has created them moral agents, is it not a necessary inference that he would place within their reach the qualifications essential to their position? And if so, does it not, at least, appear that revelation is both *necessary* and *probable?* It is inconsistent with the admitted perfections of God, that he should leave any of his works imperfect or deficient. Therefore we cannot suppose that he would leave man — the noblest of his sublunary creation — destitute of the essential means for performing that part which is the great end of his being. Shall it be supposed that a being capable of knowing God, of admiring his perfections, walking in his ways, and enjoying his smiles, is to be left to grope his way through life so utterly and hopelessly ignorant of that God "in whom he lives, and moves, and has his being"? That we may *know* God, it is necessary he should "speak to us by his Son."

The worship of pagan nations was such as might reasonably be expected from their ignorance of the true God and his character. As they attributed all manner of abominations and crimes to their divinities, so they encouraged the same in their worship. In nearly all heathen countries, the altars of religion are crimsoned with the blood and smoked with the bodies of human sacrifices. There is incontestable evidence that this abominable worship obtained, not only among barbarous nations, but the most intelligent and refined. It prevailed among the ancient Canaanites. It was practiced by the Syrians, Persians, Phenicians, and all the nations of the East. The Scythians, Thracians, Druids, Gauls, and Germans, were polluted with the same cruel abomination. The Carthaginians sacrificed to Moloch thousands of infants. The sunny plains of Africa have been dyed with the blood of millions offered in sacrifice to devils. On our own continent, it is said, Montezuma offered annually a sacrifice to the sun of twenty thousand human victims. In India, it is well known that millions have been cast to the crocodiles of the Ganges, or crushed beneath the wheels of Juggernaut. And even learned Greece and Rome, with all their

boasted statesmen, philosophers, poets, and orators, have left upon the monuments of their greatness the stain of human blood poured in sacrifice to idols.

And what has been the character of the *temple service* among pagans generally? It has been but a school of vice, where drunkenness and revelry, lasciviousness and impurity, and all manner of abomination, have been practiced and encouraged. The heathen mysteries, which probably originated in the worship of Isis and Osiris with the Egyptians, and were afterward adopted in Persia, as well as in Greece and Rome, were not exempt from impurities and crimes of the most shameful character. Even the Eleusinian mysteries practiced at Athens, whatever may have been their original design, were but a canopy of darkness, covering from the public gaze the most atrocious impurities which were "done in secret." Their evident tendency was to increase superstition and licentiousness. And this evil machinery was strengthened in its influence by the fact that the gods whom they worshiped were celebrated for the very crimes they here encouraged and learned to imitate. What could be the effect of such a religious service, but to degrade the intellect, imbrute the moral sensibilities, and steep the soul in iniquity? If this be the religion which man, left to himself, will follow, how necessary must be divine revelation to scatter by its beams these Cimmerian clouds, and pour into these waters of bitterness its healing streams! Does not reason proclaim that a wise and merciful Creator will be led, by his attributes, to rescue from such a state his creature man, by conferring upon him a revelation of his will?

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER II.

QUESTION 1. What is the general definition given of a divine revelation?
2. In what respect are we in danger of erring in reference to *reason*, as connected with revelation?
3. To what extent should reason be used in investigating the evidences of Christianity?
4. When satisfied that God has given us a revelation, how should reason farther be employed?
5. Does revelation contain any thing contrary to reason?
6. Does it contain any thing beyond the comprehension of reason?
7. How may we account for apparent discrepancies between reason and revelation?
8. Is the *prima facie* evidence *for* or *against* revelation?
9. With what generally-admitted fact does the author begin?
10. To what does he appeal for the establishment of that fact?
11. What is the second argument in favor of moral agency?
12. Can man by nature gain the knowledge necessary for him as a moral agent?
13. With what class of skeptics does the author propose to argue?
14. What knowledge of God and his attributes did the ancient pagans possess?
15. From what source was it derived?
16. How does the character of their worship show their ignorance of God?
17. Among what nations have human sacrifices been offered?
18. What was the character of the heathen mysteries?
19. What was their natural result?

CHAPTER III.

REVELATION NECESSARY TO TEACH THE ORIGIN, DUTY, AND DESTINY OF MAN.

In this chapter we propose to show that revelation is *necessary* to teach us what we ought to know concerning ourselves—our *origin*, *duty*, and *destiny*.

By claiming that revelation is *necessary*, we do not mean that it is so in the *absolute* and *strongest* sens or that God is *so obliged* by his attributes, or the nature of things, by such necessity, that he could not avoid furnishing us a revelation of his will. The necessity in the case relates solely to the character and wants of man. Such are his destitution and imbecility, that he greatly *needs* a revelation from God—that is, he cannot otherwise gain that information which is indispensable, to enable him to fill the measure of his being, and the end of his creation, as a moral agent. In this sense, we consider revelation *necessary*.

We think that the *possibility* and *probability* of revelation are both clearly implied in its *necessity;* and therefore we deem a separate discussion of those questions superfluous. To deny that revelation is *possible*, is to deny the divine omnipotence. And if it be shown that revelation is *necessary*, its *probability* must be admitted as an inevitable sequence.

Occupying, as we unquestionably do, the position of intellectual, rational, moral agents, reason demands that we possess that information which is necessary to our character and position. Surely it cannot be consistent with the attributes of God, that he should leave his creature, thus nobly endowed, to grope in the dark in reference to his own *origin*, *duty*, and *destiny!* Unless we know our *origin*—that "God hath made us, and not we ourselves"—how can we feel our dependence upon him, and our obligation to do his will? And unless we are sensible of this dependence and obligation, by what influence can we be led to the performance of our duty, or even to know that such a thing as *duty*, in reference to ourselves, can exist? Unless we *know what* our duty is, how can we be expected to perform it, however much we may feel the

obligation? And unless we have some knowledge of our *destiny*—unless assured of the immortality of our nature, and that we must meet the retributions of an hereafter—where will be the sanctions essential to enforce the will of God, as the law and rule of life, and the standard of moral rectitude? And without such standard or rule, clearly understood, how can we either occupy the position, or perform with propriety the part, of moral agents?

We think it clear, that if man be a moral agent, he must have some satisfactory knowledge of his *origin*, *duty*, and *destiny*. But without revelation, *have* we, or *can* we have, this knowledge? Deny that God hath spoken to man; close the Bible, and ask the pagan world: Whence came man? In what part of the universe did he originate? From what source did he spring into being? Aside from revelation, this whole subject rests under an impenetrable cloud. No ray of light is to be seen. Ask the "wise men of the East," the Brahmans and philosophers of India, and they will tell you that man was formed from the different parts of the body of the Creator—some from his mouth; others from his breast, or arm, or thigh, or foot.

But go to the masters of Grecian and Roman learning—after they had enriched their magazines by ransacking the lore of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia—and how much better are their teachings? Diodorus Siculus, a learned historian of the famous Augustan age, after traversing Europe and Asia, and devoting thirty years to the task, comes forth with a general history of all nations, and, in reference to the origin of the human race, tells us "that moisture generates creatures from heat as from a seminal principle, whence it is manifest that, in the beginning of the world, through the fertility of the soil, the first men were formed in Egypt." The presumption of this erudite pagan is, that from the fermenting mud on the banks of the Nile men originally came forth like frogs, and thus the world has been peopled. Nor need it be thought that this account does injustice to the pagan world; for if there be in all the writings of pagan philosophers any thing better, it has been pilfered from revelation.

Some have supposed that man never had a beginning, but that the race has been eternally propagated by an infinite succession of generations—a proposition too absurd to deserve notice. Some have attributed the origin of man to the elephant's snout, and some to the dragon's tooth, and others to a fortuitous flowing together of primeval atoms; and thus one absurd conjecture after another upon the subject has received favor with the philosophers and schools of pagan antiquity. Who that reflects upon this subject can fail to be convinced that reve-

lation was *necessary* to dispel these dark clouds which have ever rested upon the heathen world, upon so interesting a question as the origin of man? One ray of light flashing from the first chapter of Genesis, is ten thousand times more satisfactory than all the silly dreams and senseless theories of paganism. But if we discard the teachings of the Bible, we are then left, as to the question of our origin, to be tossed forever upon the waves of wild conjecture.

Without revelation, we are quite as destitute in reference to a knowledge of our *duty*. To a moral agent, this knowledge is indispensable. Without it, moral agency is an utter absurdity.

To see clearly what our condition would be without revelation, we need only look at the condition of pagans in all ages and in all parts of the world. What has ever been the state of morals in those dark regions? What were their national codes, the teachings of their philosophers and schools, and the example of the wisest and best of their sages, and the masses of their people? Not the first precept of the decalogue was ever understood and carried out among them.

We need not dwell upon the general licentiousness and crime in which the heathen masses have ever been immersed—their falsehood and theft, their debaucheries and murders, their profanity and vile uncleanness—but let us look at the theories and practice of the more enlightened and better classes. They knew nothing of the great Christian duty of loving our enemies, and doing good to all: they inculcated revenge as a virtue; pride and worldly ambition they encouraged and extolled. In Egypt and Sparta, theft was permitted and justified. Both Aristotle and Plato, with all their philosophy and refinement, saw nothing wrong in the exposure of infants, or the crime of abortion. The murder of weak, deformed, or imperfect children, was authorized by the renowned Lycurgus. In the refined city of Athens, with the sanction of public sentiment and civil authority, innocent infants were exposed, and virtuous women were treated as slaves. Socrates, Plato, and Seneca, both by precept and example, taught that there was nothing indecent or wrong in common swearing. Even among the renowned sages, and erudite masters of philosophy, unnatural lusts were not only taught and allowed, but unblushingly indulged. The practice of adultery was rather sanctioned and commended than censured or condemned. Cicero and Seneca were the open apologists and advocates of suicide; and Demosthenes, Cato, Brutus, and Cassius, hallowed it by their example.

With all these authentic facts before us, can we believe that a divine revelation is not needed to teach man his duty? If such were the

morals taught by the most intelligent and virtuous in the center of civilization, letters, and refinement, and even in the most favored times, what must have been the degradation of the masses? Contrast this picture with the justice, meekness, gentleness, temperance, chastity, purity, truth, sincerity, holiness, and benevolence of Christianity, and then decide the question: Was not revelation needed to teach man his duty?

There is no reason to suppose that modern unbelievers in Christian lands, destitute of the influence of revelation, would be wiser or better than Socrates or Plato, Seneca or Cicero. Such has been the influence of gospel precept, of the publication of the great lesson of love to God and man, in Christian lands, that it is difficult for the infidel to conceive his indebtedness to the Bible. Take the Saviour's golden rule—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them"—and it embodies a more complete system of moral science than can be gained from all the tomes of pagan lore. Man never knew his great duty as a moral agent till he read the two great commandments of "loving God with all the heart, and loving our neighbor as ourselves;" and these holy precepts were never known on earth, except as borrowed from revelation.

Revelation is farther needed to instruct us concerning our *destiny* Without the doctrine of the soul's immortality, and of future rewards and punishments, there can be no substantial foundation for morals. Without penal sanctions, there may be room for *counsel* or *advice*, but there can be no place for *law;* and *law* is essential to moral agency.

In regard to the soul, the notions of the wisest of the pagans were diverse, vague, and unsatisfactory. They were clouded with doubt and uncertainty. Among the Greeks, the atheists, as well as the principal schools of deistical philosophers—the Pythagoric, the Platonic, the Peripatetic, and the Stoic—all taught that God was the soul of the world, and that human souls are but an emanation, or separation of essence, from God, and that after their separation from the body at death, they will be reunited to God by refusion, as a drop of water to the ocean. This, it will be perceived, is substantially the doctrine of annihilation. Some of them held that this reunion of souls with God took place with all men at death; others, (the Pythagoreans,) that it was not till after a succession of transmigrations; and others still, (the Platonists,) held that the pure, unpolluted souls, were absorbed in the divine essence, immediately on death, but that others entered into a succession of other bodies, till, being purified by the process, they reëntered the parent substance.

Democritus, and others, were real materialists, holding that the soul had no existence except as connected with the body, and that death is the end of the human career. Epicurus and his followers also denied a future state, and Cicero testifies that the masses of the people were followers of Epicurus.

It is admitted that Socrates, Plato, Cicero, and a few of the wisest of the heathen philosophers, rose above the masses, and uttered some elevated notions concerning the soul and an hereafter. But they had no settled conviction—no firm assurance. With them, all was flickering hope, emitting a faint gleam to-day, to go out to-morrow. All was the unsatisfactory struggles of reason feebly grappling with a theme too wonderful for her unassisted faculties, and, like some half-fledged bird, making "unearthly flutterings" in its fruitless effort to fly. They never arrived at a certainty. Hypothesis, conjecture, and a degree of probability and hope, unsatisfying to their own minds, was all they could reach. And of this disquieting uncertainty and depressing doubt, they made ample confession, and mourned their inability to find a firmer basis for their reasoning and a surer foundation for their hope.

And now, we ask, Can it be supposed that God, after having made man "in his own image," and endued him with the noble principle of free moral agency, will leave him thus adrift, like a ship at sea without rudder or compass, to be wildly driven and tossed by the winds? Does not man need, not only a *hope*, but to be possessed of an *assurance*, of his immortality? And it is now almost universally admitted that this certainty can only be gained by a revelation from God. Is it not clear that God, who spoke man into being, can, with equal ease, speak him out of being; and whether he will or not, who can know but God, and he to whom he may reveal it? That he has revealed this doctrine, seems to us as certain as that man is constituted a moral agent. Surely it must greatly enhance our enjoyment to *know* that we shall live hereafter! And will not God, who alone can impart that knowledge, and who delights in the happiness of all, confer upon us this blessing?

But if divine revelation was thus necessary to teach us concerning God and his worship, and concerning man, as to his origin, duty, and destiny, it is equally clear that it was necessary to teach us the way of *reconciliation* to God, and of *eternal salvation*. That man is a sinful being, in a state of guilt and consequent unhappiness, the candid, intelligent deist, cannot deny. It is a truth recorded upon the conscience of every reflecting man, and upon every page of the world's history. It is not only a doctrine of the Bible, but has been fully admitted by all the sages and philosophers of paganism. To discover our great

moral malady—our state of sin and misery—has been no difficult task for human reason, even where the light of divine revelation has not shone. But farther, the light of nature is too dim to conduct the anxious inquirer. Reason alone may teach man to sigh over his miseries *here*, but faith in the revelation of God must point him to his remedy, light up the torch of hope, and teach him to smile at the prospect of a blissful *hereafter*. After all the anxieties and struggles of the wisest of the pagans upon the subject, they honestly confessed their utter helplessness.

According to the admissions of all the most intelligent deists, God is not only good, but just, and must "render to every man according to his works." Man being constituted a moral agent, must be under law to his Maker. This law is just, and holy, and righteous; and as such, "every transgression and disobedience must receive a just recompense of reward." But the great question is, How can man obtain pardon for sins committed? Close the Bible, and from all the voices of nature there is heard no solution of this problem. Should man be supposed capable, beginning at any definite period in his history, of rendering perfect obedience for all time to come, he would then only be doing his duty for the time. The past could not be affected by this period of rectitude, however perfect or long-protracted it might be. No claim of violated justice would be met; no past sin would be blotted out. The thunder of the insulted law would still be sounding in his ear: "Pay me what thou owest."

That man needs the pardon of sin, is testified, not only by the universal suffrage of conscience, but by the sacrifices so generally prevalent in the worship of the heathen world. While it is clear that sacrificial worship originated in the appointment of God, yet its perpetuation by tradition among the pagans, in however corrupt a form, evinces their felt necessity of pardon. Nor has this necessity been denied by modern unbelievers. But reason has failed to show how this pardon may be obtained. Some have relied upon the abstract benevolence of God, arguing that God is too good to punish his creatures for every slight offense, or to punish them severely at all; but this plea is inconsistent with reason, and leads to absurdity. The same ground on which God would punish any sinner, to any degree, for any offense, would require him to punish every sinner, according to his deservings, for every offense. Hence, to claim pardon by mere prerogative, on the ground of the divine goodness, is to abrogate all law, and disrobe man of his moral agency. It would dishonor God, setting his attributes at war. It would overthrow his justice, under the false pretense of extolling his

goodness. In the nature of things, pardon cannot flow from government, as a matter of course. That would be to destroy all law, and proclaim universal license to sin. Pardon, by mere prerogative, or law, would require it in every case; and that would be a subversion of all authority and government.

But a large class of unbelievers contend that God may pardon the sinner on the ground of *repentance* alone. This principle was laid down by Lord Herbert as one of the pillars of his deistical scheme, and has been advocated by the most numerous class of infidels. And we regret to know that some, calling themselves Christians, have favored the same doctrine. But against this theory there are several unanswerable objections.

If by repentance be meant merely a *sorrow for sin*, such as every sinner will be likely to feel as soon as overtaken by the just punishment for his sin, and resulting solely from that punishment—to pardon every sinner on the ground of *that* repentance, would be no better than pardon on mere prerogative; for what sinner, when made to feel the penalty of violated law, will not be sorry for having incurred it? And to release from punishment as soon as it is felt, is the same as not to inflict it at all; and that would amount to the abrogation of all law.

But if by repentance be understood that contrition for sin which implies a real reformation of heart and life, from a sincere conviction of the intrinsic evil of sin, and of its offensiveness to God, this is a repentance that infidelity never produced. It is a fruit which never grew in nature's garden. It can only result from the gracious spiritual influence which the gospel provides, through the atonement of Christ. And in that case, pardon, though not given without repentance, is not on the *ground* of repentance, but of the atonement, and on the condition of faith. For the deist to base pardon on this ground, would be to renounce his infidelity, and to kneel at the cross of the Redeemer.

Again, if pardon may be conferred on the mere ground of repentance, then it would follow that whenever the sinner repents, the entire penalty of his sins should at once be removed. But such is evidently not the fact. Repentance does not restore the wasted fortune, health, and character, of the sinner. In regard to the things of this life, repentance does not remove the evils already incurred by sin; yet it may secure indemnity against similar consequences in the future, by saving us from turning again to sin and folly. Even so, in reference to spiritual things, repentance may prevent an accumulation of guilt in

the future, but it cannot absolve from the guilt of a single sin of the past.

Repentance cannot change the divine law, nor the nature of the sin by which it has been insulted. And while these remain the same, on what principle can pardon be secured? The penalty must remain in its force, or the law, by the violation of which it has been incurred, must be satisfied, either in the person of the offender, or a substitute. The sinner, in his own person, can only meet the claims of the violated law, by suffering the penalty to the last jot and tittle. Nature can point to no substitute. The voice of reason speaks of no deliverer. The wealth of kings is too poor to purchase the pardon of one sin, nor can the wisdom of the schools show where it is to be found. But God, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, "hath found a ransom;" and revelation, shedding forth her beams upon the darkness of a guilty world, and lifting up her voice, cries: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"

Natural religion can show us our misery, and pierce our vitals with the sting of sin; but revealed religion can point us to our remedy, and pluck that sting away. Natural religion may awaken our anxieties, tax the utmost powers of our reason, and suspend us forever, vibrating between hope and despair; but revealed religion places our feet upon the Rock, washes us from our sins, and anchors our hope in heaven. How precious, then, the revelation of God to a guilty world! How necessary to cheer us amid the darkness and gloom of this world, and to conduct us to the fruitions of the next!

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER III.

QUESTION 1. Revelation is necessary to teach three things—what are they?

2. In what sense is the term *necessary* here understood?

3. Are the possibility and probability of revelation implied by its *necessity?*

4. Why is it necessary for us to know our origin—our duty—our destiny?

5. Can we know our origin without revelation?

6. What notion had the pagans on this subject?

7. Why is a knowledge of our duty essential to the character of a moral agent?

8. What has always been the state of morals among pagans?

9. What crimes have they classed among the virtues?

10. Did their sages and philosophers sanction these crimes?

11. Why are modern skeptics wiser or better than ancient pagans were?

12. Why is revelation needed to teach us concerning our *destiny?*

13. What were the pagan views concerning the soul and immortality?

14. Why was revelation necessary to teach us the plan of savation?

15. Wherein appears the superiority of *revealed* to natural religion?

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHARACTER OF EVIDENCE PROPER ON THE SUBJECT OF REVELATION — CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AND THE BIBLE.

It may be proper, before we proceed farther in this investigation, to call attention to the *degree* of evidence which we have a right to expect, and with which we should be satisfied on the great question before us. And first, we remark that the evidence should be in accordance with the nature of the subject. In reference to physical subjects coming under cognizance of the exact sciences, mathematical demonstration is not only attainable, but requisite, and nothing less should satisfy the inquiring mind. But in reference to *moral* subjects, to which the admeasurements of the exact sciences are inapplicable, mathematical demonstration is impossible, and a reasonable mind would not demand it. For illustration, let any sane person trace the various steps in the solution of a problem in Euclid, seeing clearly the necessary links in the chain of the demonstration, and it is impossible for him to doubt the truth of the conclusion. He sees that it *must* be so, and *cannot* be otherwise. But let him turn his attention to some moral subject—let him inquire, for instance, on what day of the week and of the month, and in what month and year, Columbus first set foot on American soil. And here, although by an accumulation of testimony the mind may be conducted to a satisfactory conclusion, yet the evidence is very different in its nature from a mathematical demonstration; nor can the mind grasp the conclusion with that positive conviction that it is obliged to be so, and cannot be otherwise, which pertains to mathematical demonstration.

On the subject of the evidences of Christianity, it is unphilosophical and absurd to demand mathematical demonstration. All that a rational mind can ask is, that the moral evidence be so clear and abundant as to conduct to the firm conviction that revelation is true *beyond the possibility of a reasonable doubt.* With this kind of evidence we have to deal on all moral subjects. By it we settle all contested points in his

tory, and determine the sense of all statutes and laws; by it we are controlled in the daily transactions of business, and our whole course of life is guided and shaped. Discard this class of testimony as unworthy to be heeded by rational minds, and you make a fearful blank upon the pages of literature, and of all science but what is mathematical, and extinguish at a blow nine-tenths of the sum of human knowledge. Let it be admitted, as the decree of sound reason and philosophy, that we are never to go forward to action upon our convictions till we can clearly see that those convictions are founded upon mathematical demonstration, and the wheels of commerce will at once be chained, the general progress of society paralyzed, and the rippling stream of every-day life become a stagnant pool.

It is upon moral evidence, and not mathematical demonstration, that Christianity founds her claims. But this evidence is not only clear and satisfactory, but is almost infinitely cumulative and abundant. It is such that, when carefully examined, the candid, sincere and docile mind, seeing no room for a reasonable doubt, may rest upon it as satisfactory; yet it is not so overwhelming but that the captious, querulous, and malicious spirit, *may* demur, and doubt, and reject, and spurn it all.

Were these evidences greatly diminished, either in number or force, they might not be sufficient to produce satisfactory conviction in the mind of the sincere and humble inquirer; but were they greatly augmented, so as to amount to mathematical demonstration, then it might be absolutely impossible for even the most captious and malicious to find room for cavil or doubt. In either case the basis of man's moral agency would be sapped; for it is essential to moral agency that man may do *either right or wrong*, and consequently, according to the decision of his own mind, voluntarily *receive* or *reject Christianity*. Deny him this power, and you destroy his accountability; but admit it, and he may believe to the saving of his soul, or he may reject revelation, but it will be at his own fearful peril.

The Old and New Testaments contain what is understood by the Christian world to be the *revelation of God*. Upon these writings the Christian religion is founded. Hence it is necessary, before we enter directly upon the discussion of the more formal *evidences* of Christianity, that we examine the claims of these writings, and be well satisfied as to the degree of credit and authority to which they are entitled. From the connection between these Scriptures and Christianity, it is clear that if the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments be a forgery, or a mere fictitious or fabulous production, then both Moses and Christ (if such persons ever lived)

were impostors, and the Jewish and Christian religions are both a manifest cheat and imposition upon the world. But on the other hand, if the genuineness, authenticity, authority, and inspiration of these Scriptures, as claimed by Christians, can be established, then it will follow that *Christianity is true.* If the Bible is the inspired word of God, then Christianity is a glorious and all-important truth. And if Christianity is true, then the Bible is a revelation of God to man. These two positions stand or fall together. The Bible and the Christian religion are either both *true* or both *false.* As it is from the Scriptures that we learn what Christianity is, and gain a knowledge of the principal and more direct evidences by which its claim to truth must be tested, we think it the more natural course in this investigation, to begin by an inquiry concerning the claims of the Scriptures to our regard and confidence.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IV.

QUESTION 1. What *kind* of evidence should we require on this subject?

2. Why is it absurd to demand mathematical domonstration?

3. What would be the effect of either greatly *increasing* or *diminishing* the evidence?

4 What is the connection between the claims of the Scriptures and of Christianity?

CHAPTER V.

ANTIQUITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

In fixing our attention upon the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the first thing demanding our notice is their remarkable *antiquity*. On this point no laborious research or extended argument is needed. In this connection we do not propose an inquiry concerning the character of the sacred writers, or the authority pertaining to their productions; these questions will be considered in their proper place. The simple question *now* before us is the *antiquity* of the Scriptures as a whole. The Christian claims both the Old and the New Testaments as a divine revelation, containing the history and setting forth the principles of his religion. These Scriptures, though written by a great variety of authors, extending through centuries, and embodying two great dispensations—the Mosaic and the Christian—are yet so intimately connected, and so necessarily dependent upon each other, that they are not to be contemplated as two distinct and separate systems, but as kindred parts of the same connected system, constituting the complete revelation of God to man.

As to the New Testament, it will be shown in its proper connection that it originated in the apostolic age, and has been received and revered by the Church, and its existence acknowledged by the world, in all succeeding ages. But for the Old Testament and its authors a much higher antiquity is claimed.

In presenting the claim of antiquity for the Scriptures, we do not pretend to prove, by an argument founded upon that consideration alone, that revelation is true; all we claim is, that antiquity entitles revelation to great reverence and respect—it is a *prima facie* presumption in its favor.

We will not here dwell upon the fact that the sacred writers not only profess to carry the chronology of man beyond the period of Homer and Cadmus, but even up to the beginning of the world. While pagan records are so soon lost amidst the clouds of Olympus or the darkness of the tombs of Egypt, revelation carries us back, without the mists of doubt or fable, to the primal birth of our race.

It may easily be shown that this antiquity has been claimed for the Old Testament and its authors, not only by Christians from the earliest ages of the Christian Church, but by the Jews from the commencement of all historic record. And this has never been contested, but has often been admitted by pagan authors, even when engaged in a direct crusade against revelation.

During the first two or three centuries of the Christian era, circumstances were probably more favorable for a thorough discussion of the evidences of Christianity than they have ever been since that period. The science and learning of the pagan nations had risen to its highest pitch, the temple of Janus had been closed, general peace prevailed throughout the world, and, by reason of the wide-spread influence of the Roman Empire, every facility existed for the extension of commerce and the rapid and wide diffusion of knowledge. Add to all this the novelty of Christianity, and the proximity of all the great and marvellous events connected with its origin and establishment, together with its antagonism to the long-established customs and religions of the world, and we have every circumstance necessary to arrest the attention and awake the interest of the most able and gifted pens on both sides of the controversy.

If Christianity be an imposition, *that* was the juncture the most favorable of all to expose the delusion. And bold was the effort, and formidable the means, employed for that object. There appeared upon the arena a succession of zealous and accomplished champions, armed and equipped with all the learning and eloquence of the schools, and stimulated by interest and goaded by malice, resolved to maintain the honor of the religion of their country, and put down the new-rising and hated superstition of Christianity. Celsus in the second century, Porphyry and Hierocles in the third, and Julian in the fourth, stepped boldly forth as formal antagonists to crush by argumentative disputation the religion of Christ. To meet this quaternity of assailants, God raised up in his Church not only a "noble army of martyrs," but an erudite and intrepid band of apologists and defenders of the faith. Chrysostom, Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustin, Origen, Eusebius, Irenæus, and Athenasius, at that interesting period fearlessly met and triumphantly vanquished the mighty champions of infidelity.

In this controversy the Christian apologists boldly asserted for the Mosaic records an antiquity beyond the claims not only of all Grecian learning, but of all heathen mythology. Surely, if these claims of antiquity on the part of Christians could have been set aside or shown

to be supposititious, these learned opponents of Christianity *could* and *would* have accomplished the task! But, so far from this being the case, there is no record of such an attempt. They either fully admitted them, or passed them by in silence, which implied the same.

Let us notice a few of the many testimonies on this subject.

Justin Martyr declares: "These things which we have learned from Christ and the prophets are the truth, and *more ancient* than any thing recorded by other writers." And he charges Plato with having "copied from Moses," who, he affirms, "was *more ancient* than all the writers of the Greeks." And this point he engages to prove "even from profane historians themselves." He quotes from Polemon, Apion, Ptolemæus, Hellanicus, Philochorus, Castor, Thallus, and several other ancient profane authors, this admission of the superior antiquity of Moses, and confirms the same by the unrebutted testimony of Philo and Josephus. He proceeds: "Socrates was the master of Plato, Plato of Aristotle. Now these men flourished in the times of Philip and Alexander of Macedon; wherefore it is plain how much older Moses must be than any of them." He adds (speaking to the Greeks): "All your poets, however ancient, your legislators, historians, philosophers, and orators, composed and spoke in the Greek character," but that "your own grammarians themselves allow that Moses wrote in the Hebrew character before Greek letters were invented."

Tatian proves by testimony from Chaldean, Phenician, and Egyptian writers, that Moses flourished not only anterior to the Trojan war, and consequently before the age of Homer, but prior to the origin of the Greek and Trojan races. He quotes testimony from Ptolemy the priest, clearly evincing that Moses wrote more than twenty generations anterior to Homer.

Clemens Alexandrinus asserts that the Grecian philosophers are "thieves and robbers, because, before the coming of Christ, they stole and appropriated to themselves portions of truth from the Hebrew prophets which they adulterated or disfigured with ignorant diligence." And this fact, we may add, is abundantly confirmed by Diodorus Siculus, from whose history it may be learned that not only Orpheus, but Homer, Solon, Pythagoras, Plato, and others, in their search for knowledge, visited Egypt, where they met with the writings of Moses.

Tertullian assumes the superior antiquity of the Mosaic writings, and that heathen philosophers have pilfered from them, as *undoubted facts*.

Origen thinks it "needless to produce Egyptian, Phenician, or Grecian testimonies (in regard to the superior antiquity of the Mosaic records), since any one may read them by consulting Josephus's works.

where is a long catalogue of authors who confirm the truth of this matter by their concurrent testimonies."

Eusebius invokes history to attest "the superior antiquity of the schools of the prophets over those of the Academy, the Lyceum, or the Portico." He shows that both Plato and Pythagoras borrowed from Moses.

Augustin assumes it as evident, from undisputed testimony, that "the Bible record is *more ancient* than the stream of Grecian literature, carrying us back beyond the days of Pythagoras, Plato, Socrates, the seven sages of Greece, Orpheus, Linus," etc. "Wherefore," he adds, "though the learning of Greece warms the world to this day, it cannot be boasted that it is as excellent as ours."

Among the writers, neither Jewish nor Christian, who have testified to the existence and antiquity of the sacred writers, may be named Manetho, Cheremon, Apollonius, Lysimachus, Strabo, Justin, Juvenal, Pliny, and Tacitus. All these, and many others, have admitted not only the superior antiquity of the Mosaic writings, but that Moses was the founder and lawgiver of the Jewish state. Indeed it may be affirmed that these facts were as notorious among the surrounding ancient nations as among the Jews themselves.

As already stated, upon the mere fact of antiquity alone the Christian does not profess to found an argument in proof of Christianity. yet it must be admitted that great advantage in the investigation is derived from this source. Revelation is here placed in the outset upon high vantage-ground. It is not only shown to be entitled to great reverence and respect, but there arises at once a *prima facie* presumption of its truth. It can scarcely be thought possible that this antiquity could be so long and so generally claimed and admitted, and no effort made for its refutation, unless it had been founded in fact. And when this antiquity is admitted, the arguments in favor of revelation must occupy a position of commanding plausibility. Indeed, it will be difficult to show *how* a system such as revelation unfolds *could* originate at so early a period, or maintain the influence it has so long wielded, unless it had been divinely revealed, and was protected by a superintending Providence.

The antiquity of the revelation of God invests it with an awe-inspiring majesty which must impress every reflecting mind. Amid the ceaseless flow of the tide of time, as age has succeeded age, the institutions and productions of human origin have been subject to continual mutation. Cities and empires have arisen and flourished for a season, but soon they have been subverted or blotted from existence; but the

Bible of God, dating its origin anterior to all the records of human genius or national greatness, still survives in grandeur unimpaired. Though it has been the object of hatred and opposition, and subjected to the fiercest assaults in every age, it has suffered no diminution of its luster. Can a structure so imperishable in its nature be wholly of earth? What can be found in all the world of earthly origin that has weathered so many storms or passed through so many conflicts as the Bible, still exhibiting its fair proportions unmarred, its beauty untarnished, and its glory undimmed? What but the special superintendence of divine Providence can account for this wonderful preservation of the Bible amid the ravages of so many centuries? The fact that this book now exists after the conflict of ages, is powerful presumptive evidence of its divine origin.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER V

Question 1. What relation do the Old and New Testaments sustain to each other?

2. Is the truth of Scripture proved by its antiquity alone?

3. Are any pagan records as ancient as those of Moses?

4. What was the most favorable age for examining the claims of Christianity?

5. What effort was then put forth against Christianity?

6 By whom was this opposition headed?

7. By whom was it successfully met?

8. What claim of antiquity did the Christian apologists assert for the Mosaic records?

9. How was this claim met?

10. What renowned Christian writers are quoted on this subject?

11. What authors, neither Jewish nor Christian, are named as testifying to the superior antiquity of the Mosaic records?

12. What kind of an argument may here be founded on antiquity?

CHAPTER VI.

AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES — GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

HAVING, in the preceding chapter, called attention to the *antiquity* of the Scriptures, we propose now to examine the *authority* to which those writings are entitled. To establish in their behalf what has generally been claimed for them by the Christian world, and what is essential to their character as a divine revelation, it must be shown:

1. That they are *genuine.*
2. That they are *authentic.*
3. That they were *divinely inspired.*
4. That they have been preserved, and handed down to us, *essentially as they were originally given.*

Before we proceed farther in the investigation of the main subject before us, we deem it necessary to define some of the terms to be employed in the discussion. We use the words *genuineness*, *authenticity*, and *integrity*, as applied to the writings of Scripture, each in a distinct and definite sense.

1. By the *genuineness* of Scripture, or of any particular portion of Scripture, or of any other composition, we mean that *it is the production of the author whose name it bears.*

2. By its *authenticity*, we mean that it is *not fictitious;* but contains a faithful record of facts as they transpired.

3. By its *integrity*, we mean that it has not been *materially altered,* but is essentially the same now as when originally given.

In the use of the terms above defined, great ambiguity and confusion have resulted, from the fact that different authors have used some of them in a *different*, and some of them in an *opposite*, sense; while others have used them, sometimes in one sense, and sometimes in another. For example, according to Dr. Hill, and some other writers, a book is *authentic* when it is the production of its professed author, and *genuine* when it has not been corrupted, or materially altered, from the original. But, according to Horne, and many who have followed him, a book is

authentic when it is a real history, relating matters of fact, and not fiction; and *genuine*, when written by the person whose name it bears. Thus it will be perceived that the definitions of these terms by the above authors have been reversed. What is *genuine* with some is *authentic* with others, and *vicè versa*.

Bishop Marsh uses the terms as synonymous. Dr. Thomas Scott seems to use the two terms, sometimes interchangeably, and sometimes in the sense given by Dr. Hill; while Dr. Paley is not consistent with himself; for in one chapter he understands by the *genuineness* of a book that it is the production of the author whose name it bears, and in another he applies this definition to the *authenticity*, and not to the *genuineness* of the book. These diversities and inconsistencies, in regard to important definitions, have tended much to perplex and embarrass the student. We consider the definition, as given by Horne, the most natural and accurate, and accordingly, as will be perceived, we have adopted, and shall follow, the same. In favor of this use of the terms, we have also the sanction of Bishop Watson and Dr. Chalmers, as well as the authority of Webster.

Before entering on the discussion of the *authority* of the Scriptures, so far as regards the *genuineness* and *authenticity* of those writings, we here premise that all this part of the discussion is only *preparatory* to the main subject. The great question at issue is this: Are the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament a revelation from God, or are they not?

In examining the claims of these writings to *genuineness* and *authenticity*, we do not propose to reach, directly, the main point in controversy; just as, in entering an inclosure by which a mansion is surrounded, we do not suppose that so soon as we have passed through the gate into the inclosure we are also within the mansion; so, in establishing the authority of Scripture, so far as genuineness and authenticity are concerned, we do not suppose that we have also established that authority, as regards the claim of divine inspiration; or that we have established the main proposition—that the Bible contains a revelation from God. But it is evident that if we would enter the mansion, we must first enter the inclosure, and pass through the same to the mansion. Even so, if we would establish the full authority claimed for the Scriptures, as a divine revelation, we must first establish that authority, so far as it is implied in the *genuineness* and *authenticity* of those writings. When we have advanced thus far, we have not entered the mansion, but we have made essential progress toward it—we are within the inclosure; we have gained a position from which we may, with facility, make that

entrance. Genuineness and authenticity are one thing; divine inspiration is another thing. Genuineness and authenticity are essential to inspiration; but inspiration does not directly and necessarily follow from them. It may be deduced from them, as a plain and irresistible inference; but these things, however kindred, are not identical.

By establishing the genuineness and authenticity of the Scriptures, we only claim that these writings are thereby placed upon a level with the productions of honest and faithful historians, who make a true record of facts, of which they have been personally cognizant, or which, from the satisfactory testimony of others, they believe to be true; and which record of facts has been transmitted to us uncorrupted, and in all things material, essentially the same as originally written. That is, we claim by this argument to show that the writers of the Scriptures are entitled to all that credit and confidence which are generally awarded, and which of right belong to any faithful historian, writing in reference to events with which he is supposed to be well acquainted. If this argument be conclusively sustained, the way will then be prepared for entering upon the main question in dispute.

Though, as we have seen, genuineness and authenticity are distinct things—so that a book that is genuine may not be authentic, and a book that is authentic may not be genuine—yet, in regard to the sacred writings, the same arguments that establish their genuineness generally prove also their authenticity. Therefore, to avoid repetition, we shall examine these two questions, relating to genuineness and authenticity, in connection.

We proceed, *first*, to consider the *genuineness and authenticity of the Old Testament.*

The question here proposed is purely historic, and must be settled by the same mode of argument by which we would determine any other question of a similar nature. Suppose that, for the first time, a friend puts into my hand the Koran of Mohammed—the Antiquities of the Jews, by Josephus—and the History of England, by Hume—and, sitting down to the examination of these works, I wish to satisfy myself as to their genuineness and authenticity, what course would I naturally pursue? Would I not, *first*, inquire whether these works had ever been attributed to any other authors; and if so, to whom, and by whom, and under what circumstances, or by what evidences sustained? *Secondly.* I would inquire by what evidence (arising from the testimony of other persons and facts, contemporary with these respective authors, and in the succeeding ages) may it be shown that these books were written by the persons whose names they bear? *Thirdly.* I would

examine the contents of the books, to see if they were according to what might reasonably be expected from such persons, as, from all the information we can obtain, we believe the reputed authors to have been.

Now, if after this examination, it appear that the works in question were never attributed to any other persons, either contemporary with the reputed authors or in the ages succeeding, but, on the contrary, that numerous other authors, either contemporary or in the succeeding ages, commencing near to that period, have referred to these productions, attributing them, as a matter not questioned, to the authors whose names they bear; and should it appear that numerous other notorious facts and circumstances tend to the confirmation of the same thing; and should it farther appear that the books in question bear strong internal marks, all leading to the same conclusion; should all these things thus appear, I could have no reasonable doubt that the books were written by the persons whose names they bear. And it is by this mode of reasoning, and by this class of testimony alone, that I can be satisfied as to the authorship of any work ever published in the world throughout all the ages past. Discard this testimony, and how can I know that the Iliad of Homer, the Æneid of Virgil, the Annals of Tacitus, the Commentaries of Cesar, the Morals of Seneca, the History of Xenophon, or even the Plays of Shakspeare, or the Poems of Milton, were written by the authors whose names they have rendered so famous? And may I not ask, who that has a reputation for letters or erudition, can doubt the genuineness of any of the books to which we have referred?

In the subject before us, it is not very material whether we begin with the Old or the New Testament. We may either commence with the present, and travel up the stream to Christ, and thence to Moses; or we may begin with Moses and travel down to Christ, and thence to the present. Perhaps, to most minds, to examine first the claims of the New Testament would, in the outset, be the more satisfactory and convincing. The evidence in this department, lying nearer to our point of vision, and being more abundant and more striking, would be likely to produce the deeper conviction. Besides, as Christ and his apostles have so thoroughly indorsed the Old Testament, not only as to its genuineness and authenticity, but also as to its divine inspiration, it necessarily follows that the establishment of the New Testament is a full confirmation of the Old. We cannot acknowledge the authority of the former without admitting that of the latter. But as it seems the more natural to pursue the chronological order of things, we will begin with the Old Testament. By this course we trust that, though convic-

tion may be less striking in the former portion of the discussion, it will be the more thorough and satisfactory in the issue.

As Moses is the reputed founder of the Jewish political and ecclesiastical establishment, and by far the most prominent author connected with the Old Testament writings, we first call attention to those books of which he is said to have been the author. These are the first five books of the Bible, commonly styled the Pentateuch.

Now, we inquire, to whom but Moses have these writings ever been ascribed? Among the multitudes who, in all succeeding ages, have referred to these writings, the world has yet to learn the name of that person, except Moses, to whom their authorship has been attributed. The books are in the world, and they must have had an origin. If Moses did not write them, we ask who did? For a hundred and fifty generations the question has been urgently pressed: Who, but Moses, wrote the Pentateuch? And no response has been heard but the voice of echo, answering "Who?"

We next inquire, What affirmative evidence is there to show that Moses was the author of these books? We answer: We have the voice of the Christian world, from the day of Pentecost to the present hour, who, without a single dissentient, have attributed these books to Moses. We have the testimony of the entire nation of the Jews, who, from their entrance into Palestine, under Joshua, to Christ, and from Christ to this hour, and amid all their wanderings, with united voice, have exclaimed, "We are Moses's disciples," and "We know that God spake unto Moses." They have attributed the Pentateuch to Moses, and to no one else; and not only so, but they have acknowledged its authority and inspiration.

Again: Josephus is clear and full in attributing the Pentateuch to Moses; and so also were Philo, the Egyptian Jew, and the entire catalogue of the Jewish rabbins.

It is true that some Jews, and Christians also, have admitted that the last two chapters of Deuteronomy, and perhaps a few other sentences in the book, were added to the original copy given by Moses; probably by Samuel, or some of the scribes engaged in copying the work. But this cannot weaken the testimony as to the body of the work. The last chapter of Deuteronomy, containing an account of Moses's death, it is probable, originally made the first chapter of the book of Joshua; and it never was supposed, by either Jews or Christians, to have been written by Moses. Two or three other brief sentences (originally inserted by some scribe after the death of Moses, as an explanatory parenthesis) have also been admitted into the text;

but this cannot set aside the overwhelming testimony, that the Pentateuch was originally given by Moses. Similar interpolations are known to have crept into the works of Homer, and other authors; yet no one, on that account, has ever denied that Homer wrote the Iliad and the Odyssey.

But pagan testimony, in addition to Christian and Jewish, abundantly confirms the fact that Moses not only lived at the period assigned to him in the Bible, but that he was the founder of the Jewish polity, and the author of the books containing the laws and religious services of that people. Many writers--Egyptian, Grecian, and Roman—might be quoted to this effect. We deem it necessary to name only a few. Of the Egyptians, Manetho and Cheremon; of the Greeks, Apollonius, Lysimachus, and Longinus; of the Romans, Juvenal, Justin, Pliny, Tacitus, Diodorus Siculus, and Celsus. These have all made reference to Moses, as the great Jewish lawgiver, not questioning his existence, or the genuineness and authenticity of his writings, as claimed by Jews and Christians. Now, is it not clear that we have a weight of evidence on this subject sufficient to satisfy all candid and impartial minds, not only that Moses lived at the period in which he is placed in the Jewish history, and is the author of the books attributed to him, but that those writings are neither fictions nor forgeries, but authentic histories of facts? But the evidence upon this subject will be much more conclusive as we advance to the remaining portion of the testimony.

In addition to the *external* evidence already adduced, we may draw from the *contents* of the Pentateuch the most satisfactory proofs of its genuineness and authenticity.

This will appear, from the very circumstantial manner in which the politico-ecclesiastical system of the Jews, embodied in those books, is blended with their national history. We find here frequent genealogies of the Jewish tribes. According to these genealogies, their lands were divided, and descended in the several tribes from generation to generation. So that, as a matter of necessity, these tables must have been carefully kept and preserved; consequently, had the Pentateuch been a fiction or a forgery of a later day, the imposition would have been easily detected. Again, the frequent reference to geographical places, and the statements, that they derived their names from events recorded in the Mosaic writings, and that the names commenced simultaneously with the events, show that these works could not have been received as a true record, unless they had been such in reality. All these things show that the writer was present at the transactions recorded, and gave a faithful account of them as they occurred.

The argument derived from the contents of the Pentateuch is most

forcibly presented by Leslie, in his "Short and Easy Method with the Deists," an abstract of which we here insert. Mr. Leslie lays down four marks by which the truth of all matters of fact may be proved. These marks will not apply to all matters of fact which are true; but all matters of fact to which they do apply *must* be true. These are the marks:

1. That the fact be such as men's *outward senses* can judge of.
2. That it be performed *publicly*, in the presence of witnesses.
3. That there be *public monuments and actions* kept up in memory of it.
4. That such monuments and actions shall be established, and commence *at the time of the fact.*

The first two of these make it impossible for any false fact to be imposed upon men at the time when it was said to be done, for every man's senses would contradict it. The two latter marks secure us against being imposed upon in any age subsequent to that in which the fact is said to have been done, for then every man would inquire for the commemorative *monuments and actions*, and might easily satisfy himself that none such existed, or had been kept up.

These marks Mr. Leslie applies to the facts of the Mosaic record. He takes it for granted that Moses could not have persuaded six hundred thousand men that he had brought them out of Egypt, leading them dry-shod through the Red Sea, fed them forty years in the wilderness with miraculous manna, and given them water to drink from the smitten rock, if these things had not been true; because the senses of every man who was then alive would have contradicted him. So that here are the first two marks.

For the same reason, he could not have made them receive his five books as true, which relate all these things as done before their eyes, if they had not been so done. Observe how positively he speaks to them: "And know you this day, for I speak not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the Lord your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched-out arm, and his miracles. But *your* eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord which he did." (Deut. xi. 2, 3, 7.) Hence we must admit it to be impossible that these books, if written by Moses in support of an imposture, could have been put upon the people who were alive at the time when such things were said to be done. Neither could they have been written by an impostor, in any subsequent age, and passed upon the people as the writings of Moses; and for this plain reason, that they speak of themselves as delivered by Moses, and kept in the

ark from his time, and state that a copy of them was likewise deposited in the hands of the king, "that he might learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them." (Deut. xvii. 19.) Here these books expressly represent themselves as being, not only the civil history, but also the established municipal law of the Jews, binding the king as well as the people. In whatever age, therefore, after Moses, they might have been forged, they could have gained no credit, for they could not then have been found either in the ark, or with the king, or anywhere else; every one would have known that he had never heard of them before.

But the books of Moses not only contain the laws themselves, but give an historical account of their institution and regular fulfillment —of the Passover, for instance, in memory of their supernatural protection upon the slaying of the first-born of Egypt; the dedication of the first-born of Israel, both of man and beast; the preservation of Aaron's rod which budded, of the pot of manna, and of the brazen serpent, which remained till the days of Hezekiah; the consecration of the tribe of Levi to the sacerdotal service; the designation of the high-priest, with his robes and his incense, his breast-plate, and his urim and thummim. From all this, and much more of the kind that might be added, it appears how utterly impossible it would have been for an impostor, in any subsequent age, to have palmed these books upon the Jews as the veritable writings of Moses. Could they have been persuaded that they had received these books from their fathers—been taught them from their childhood, and had taught them to their children; that they had been circumcised themselves, and had circumcised their children; that they had never eaten swine's flesh; that they had uniformly observed the ritual and sacrificial services of their splendid tabernacle; *could* they have been thus persuaded, when they had never heard of any of these things before? Equally impossible would it have been to impose upon the Jews all these laws and observances, in one age, without any reason or ground of their origin, and then for another impostor, in a subsequent age, to invent all these reasons, and to persuade them that they had all along been observing these things, for reasons of which they had never before heard. Thus it is clear that the two latter marks—the *public monuments and actions*, and the institution of these *at the time of the fact*—preclude the possibility of imposition at any subsequent age. And if, as we have shown, the Mosaic writings could never have been received by the Jews, either in the days of Moses or at any subsequent period, as the writings of Moses, unless they had been such, it necessarily follows, since the Jews have always

affirmed that they received these records from Moses, that they must be both genuine and authentic.

We now inquire, How may we satisfy ourselves of the genuineness and authenticity of the *Old Testament as a whole?*

That the books of the Old Testament, as now published among us, are the same originally received among the Jews, and which have ever been held by them as the divinely-authorized history of their national polity and religion, we have the most satisfactory evidence for believing.

Our Old Testament entirely corresponds with that which is now in the possession of the Jews, and which they testify, with united voice, is the same that they have ever had among them from the first receiving of their Scriptures, and which they have ever watched over and preserved with the most scrupulous care. This testimony alone is most indubitable, that these Scriptures have not been corrupted or altered since the origin of Christianity.

Such has been the enmity of the Jews against the Christians, from the commencement of Christ's religion to the present day, that the followers of Christ, had they been so disposed, could not have corrupted the Old Testament without being instantly detected and exposed by the Jews. And that the Jews have not corrupted *their* copies we are assured, not only by the sacredness with which they have always held their Scriptures, and the abhorrence with which they have ever looked upon the crime of corrupting or interpolating one jot or tittle of the sacred word, but by the fact that their attempt would instantly have been detected and exposed by the learned doctors with whom the early Christian Church abounded. Neither Jews nor Christians could have made any change in these writings without being detected by the other party. And that no change has been made we may be doubly assured, by the fact that Jews and Christians have, to this day, the same Old Testament, even as to each book, chapter, and verse.

In confirmation of the same position, Josephus, about the close of the first century, published in his works a catalogue of the books of Scripture, which he asserts the Jews have ever held as of divine authority, and carefully preserved among them. In this catalogue he names the five books of Moses, thirteen of the prophets, four of Hymns and Moral Precepts. This—allowing, as critics assert, that Ruth was added to Judges, and the Lamentations to Jeremiah—will make the books given by Josephus correspond with those of the Old Testament as it now exists among us.

Next, it is a remarkable fact that, in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, some two hundred and eighty years before the Christian era, the

Old Testament, as then existing, in possession of the Jews, was translated into Greek for the use of the Jews in Egypt, and a copy of it placed in the Alexandrian Library. This version, called the Septuagint, as the Greek language was then almost universally prevalent, soon became widely disseminated, and was thenceforth accessible to the whole learned world. It was in common use in Palestine in the time of our Saviour; and, to this day, has a place in the library of almost every clergyman. The close correspondence of this version with the Old Testament now in use shows that it must have been a faithful translation, and that the Jewish Scriptures existed in that day substantially as we have them now.

It farther appears that some years previous to the Babylonian captivity, the Samaritans procured a copy of the Pentateuch in Hebrew, which they always afterward religiously observed. Now it is evident, from the fixed enmity always existing between the Jews and Samaritans, that from the time they both had a copy of the Pentateuch, each claiming their own to be the genuine writing of Moses, neither party could have altered it without being detected by the other; and the enmity between the two is a sure guarantee that they never consented together to perpetrate upon themselves a fraud which they viewed with the deepest abhorrence. Hence the agreement of both these copies with each other, and with the Pentateuch, as we now have it, shows conclusively that this very important portion of the Jewish Scriptures has not been corrupted since that period. And this brings us to a point of time only three or four centuries subsequent to the giving of the law. He who can believe that these Scriptures, in view of the circumstances under which they were given, *could* have either been materially altered or passed upon the Jews as their divinely-authorized laws, which they had ever revered and kept as such, when they had never known any thing of them before, is certainly able to shape his faith to his notion, irrespective of evidence.

When we look at the solemn circumstances under which the law was delivered, and the sacred injunction given by Moses to the Levites, "Take the book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be for a witness against thee;" when we remember that this law professes to contain, not only the civil code, but the religious ritual of that people, adopted and put in operation at the very time when first given; nothing can be clearer than the conclusion, that if it was not given by Moses, and received by the people, at the time and under the circumstances as detailed in the book itself, it never could have been imposed upon them at any subse-

quent age; and this is true, not only in reference to the Pentateuch, but to the whole of the Jewish Scriptures. The Jews have ever professed to have received them as divinely authorized from the very day in which they were first delivered by their reputed authors. Of course they could not have been foisted upon them as such by an impostor in any subsequent day. Hence we conclude that the genuineness and authenticity of the Old Testament is established beyond the possibility of a reasonable doubt.

If farther evidence upon this subject were at all needed, we have it, in the most conclusive shape, in that direct and positive sanction which Christ and his apostles gave to the Scriptures of the Old Testament. They everywhere referred to them as the authoritative word of God. We will not here pause to quote particularly their testimony to this effect, as we shall present it in another connection. It is enough now to say, that no man can admit the divine mission of Christ and his apostles, and consistently question that the Old Testament, as we now have it, is the inspired word of God. Though our Saviour repeatedly reproved the Jews for neglecting and misconstruing the Scriptures, yet he never once intimated that they had corrupted or interpolated the sacred word. Hence the evidence is conclusive, that the Old Testament, as then in use among the Jews, was genuine and authentic; and if so, we are bound to accord the same divine authority to that volume, as now in our possession.

Deny this divine authority to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and what must be the result? The very world we inhabit, with its myriads of intelligent beings swarming upon its surface, would resemble some lost vessel drifting wildly upon the broad ocean, having lost her rudder and compass, her log-book and reckoning; so that no one aboard could tell from what port he set sail, to what point of the compass he was drifting, or to what haven he was bound. Even so, deny the authenticity of that time-honored record; demolish, by a puff of sarcasm, that Heaven-attested and Heaven-preserved scroll laid up by the side of the ark; extinguish, by a blast of infidel sneer, that luminary lifted up in the wilderness by the hand of Moses, and as the anxious inquirer ascends the stream of time, passing through centuries, in search for the birth of creation and the origin of our race, a darkness, thick as that of Egypt, settles upon his vision, and he is lost amid the Cimmerian clouds. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness"—a type of the Saviour of the world elevated upon the cross for the salvation of all who will look to him by faith—even so did he receive from the hand and from the mouth of God the "tables of stone" and "the book of

the law," whose principles of eternal and immutable truth are destined to triumph over the ravages of time, and enlighten and warm with their effulgent beams the most benighted regions and the latest generations of earth. The Pentateuch of Moses, like "the burning bush" on Mount Horeb, though ever enveloped in the flames of persecution, remains, and shall forever remain, "unconsumed."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VI.

Question 1. What four things are claimed for the Scriptures, as to their authority?
2. What does each of these terms imply?
3. Have authors been harmonious in the use of these terms?
4. Do genuineness and authenticity imply inspiration?
5. To what then do they amount?
6. By what mode of argument are the genuineness and authenticity of the Scriptures established?
7. Have the writings of Moses ever been attributed to any other author?
8. What sources of evidence are appealed to, as proving that Moses wrote the Pentateuch?
9. What Egyptian authors testified that Moses was the author of these writings? What Greeks? What Romans?
10. How may the genuineness and authenticity of these books be proved *internally?*
11. What is Mr. Leslie's argument?
12. How is it proved that our Old Testament is the same originally given the Jews?
13. What testimony is given on the subject by Christ and his apostles?

CHAPTER VII.

AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES — GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE volume comprising the history of the establishment of Christianity and the doctrines and institutions of the Christian Church, and for which Christians have ever claimed a divine origin, is styled the *New Testament.* In reference to this volume there are two important questions which we propose now to consider, viz.:

1. How may we satisfy ourselves that we have in the New Testament *the proper canon*, or the duly authorized books that should be included in this volume?

2. By what evidence may it be shown that the writings of the New Testament *are genuine and authentic?*

1. The question—What books ought to be embraced in the New Testament as *canonical?*—is mainly an *historical* one, and can only be answered by the same kind of evidence by which we determine the *genuineness* and *authenticity* of those writings. The Roman Catholics assert the infallibility of the Church, and then appeal to her decision as the only authority on the subject. Thus it is plain that they reason in "a circle." By this glaring sophism they prove *the Scriptures* by the Church, and *the Church* by the Scriptures—that is, they prove by the infallibility of the Church what books *are Scripture*, and then by the testimony of Scripture that the Church is infallible.

Some Protestants, drifting to an opposite extreme, rely altogether on *internal* evidence. Both these methods of settling the canon are liable to the same objection; indeed, they both effectually *unsettle* the canon. According to the Roman Catholic plan, we can never *certainly know* what the Scriptures are, for their same infallible guide may decide one way to-day and another way to-morrow; and then what is authorized Scripture at one time might not be such at another. But if we rely solely on *internal* evidence, this would be ever liable to vary, for in this kind of testimony scarcely two minds will judge alike. What may be very satisfactory to some, may not be so to others.

The only true way of determining what books belong to the New Testament revelation is to appeal to the general consent of the early Fathers who lived nearest to the apostles. It is a mere question of fact in reference to which they were in a condition to be well informed, and could not have been generally deceived; and it is very certain that no subsequent testimony can set aside or be as conclusive as the general consent of the Fathers and of the whole Christian Church in the age immediately succeeding the apostles.

A learned author has presented the following rule on this subject, viz.:

"Every book is genuine which was esteemed genuine by those who lived nearest to the time when it was written, and by the ages following, in a continued series."

It must be admitted that there is no other rational mode of settling a question of this nature; and where this testimony is full and harmonious, it must result in conviction beyond the possibility of a reasonable doubt. The genuineness and authenticity of the books of the New Testament are sustained by a weight of testimony more full and satisfactory than can be claimed for any other production of any age half so remote from our times.

The testimony of the Church confers no authority on the writings of the New Testament, but is only of use as it tends to establish the fact as to what books were written by the apostles; hence the canon of Scripture is not ascertained by the decision of any bishop or pope, or by the vote of any council, but by the settlement of the authorship of the books in question.

On this subject, although the witness of Jews and pagans is of great corroborative force, yet the testimony of the early Christians is far the most conclusive and satisfactory, for they were in a situation to know the facts in the case. It is not important when or by whom these books were collected into one volume, and called the New Testament; all that is essential is, to be assured that they were written by the inspired apostles and evangelists. But this will be most clearly shown by the examination of the second question proposed.

2. By what evidence may it be shown that the writings of the New Testament are *genuine and authentic?*

We ask: How do we know that the writings of Herodotus, Livy, Tacitus, Pliny, Milton, Blackstone, or any other author of any past age, are genuine? The answer is obvious; and in reference to any other authors, except the sacred writers, we have little or no controversy. We inquire: What has been the testimony of those who lived nearest to the

time of these authors, and of the ages following, in a continued series? If we find a general concurrence of testimony in this line all attributing the work in question to the same author, or to him whose name it bears, the point is as well established as any historic question can be, and should command our ready assent. If we receive not such testimony, we must doubt all history: we must not only doubt the genuineness and authenticity of all the writings of Greece and Rome, but also of the histories of Hume and Gibbon, and of the writings of Locke and Bacon, of Baxter and Stillingfleet.

Let us now look at the evidence of this kind in favor of the *New Testament.*

In the first place we remark, there is no counter testimony leading us to suspect the genuineness and authenticity of these books. It cannot be shown that any one, in the period in which these works first appeared, questioned their authenticity and genuineness: no records of that day tend to impugn these writings as spurious—no long time elapsed after these writers in which these books were unknown, but they are referred to by contemporary authors—no facts are in them recorded contradicted by authentic records, or not synchronizing with their times; hence it may be asserted that there is no *opposing* evidence to disprove the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament.

As the quotations from the New Testament, and reference to the various books it contains, are so numerous in all ages of the Church, from the present up to the fourth century, we deem it useless to trace the evidence through that period. It will be admitted by deists themselves, that, if these writings are not genuine, they could not have been foisted upon the Church subsequently to the fourth century; therefore we commence our investigation at that chronological point.

In the fourth century we have no less than ten distinct catalogues of the books of the New Testament. Six of these correspond perfectly with the books of our present New Testament, viz., that of Athanasius in the year 315, Epiphanius in 370, Jerome in 392, Rufinus in 390, Augustin in 394, and that of forty-four bishops, at the third Council of Carthage, in 397. Of the other four catalogues—those of Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, in 340; of the bishops at the Council of Laodicea, in 364; and of Gregory, Bishop of Constantinople, in 375—all correspond with our books, except that they omit the book of Revelation; and in a list by Philaster, Bishop of Brescia, in 380, the Epistle to the Hebrews and the book of Revelation are omitted, though he elsewhere acknowledges both these books. Thus it seems that even if we admit at this period a doubt as to the authenticity of one or two books, they are

such as not to affect the truth of the gospel history or the doctrines of Christianity; but any one who desires to do so, may easily satisfy himself, by consulting our numerous able authors who have written expressly on the canon of Scripture, that the evidence for the two books omitted in one or two of the lists given places their authenticity on as firm a footing as that of the other books.

From these catalogues alone, it is evident that in the fourth century the Scriptures of the New Testament not only then existed as we have them now, but their authenticity was generally acknowledged by the Church. Numerous quotations from the Fathers of this century to the same effect might be given, but we deem it needless to say more, except to refer to the witness of Eusebius, in his well-known history.

In the third century, Arnobius and Lactantius in Africa, and Victorinus in Germany, wrote commentaries on parts of the New Testament, and made extensive quotations from them; but the most important testimony of this century is that of Origen, who wrote commentaries on all the Scriptures, considering them as the acknowledged revelation of God, and embodying a catalogue of the books of the New Testament precisely as now in our possession. Various other writers in this century—Gregory, Bishop of Cesarea; Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria; Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage; Caius Romanus, Hippolytus Portuensis, Ammonius, and Julius Africanus—extensively quoted from and referred to most of the books of the New Testament.

Tertullian, of the second century, bears the most indubitable testimony to the authenticity of the New Testament. His writings are filled with long quotations from all the books of the New Testament, except the Epistle of James, the Second Epistle of Peter, and the Second and Third Epistles of John. But, as he did not profess to give a complete catalogue, his silence is no evidence against a book he has not named. Farther, he expressly affirms that, when he wrote, "the Christian Scriptures were open to the inspection of all the world, both Christian and heathen, without exception."

In addition to Tertullian, might be named—in the second century—Clement, of Alexandria; Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch; Athenagoras, a converted philosopher of Athens; and Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons; who all (but especially Clement and Irenæus) quoted extensively from the books of the New Testament, referring to them as of divine authority with all Christians. What adds weight to the testimony of Irenæus is the fact that he was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John. Though he gives no complete catalogue of all the books, yet he mentions the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles to the

Romans, the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians, the two Epistles to Timothy, the Epistle to Titus, the two Epistles of Peter, and the First and Second Epistles of John. In another place he has quoted the Epistle of James, and has also borne clear testimony to the book of Revelation. He farther mentions "the code of the New Testament as well as the Old," and calls the one as well as the other "The Oracles of God, and Writings dictated by his Word and Spirit."

Not detaining with Melito, Bishop of Sardis—Hegesippus, a converted Jew—and Tatian, a converted pagan philosopher—who, in the second century, bore favorable testimony to the authenticity of the most important portions of the New Testament, we close the evidence from this century with the witness of Justin Martyr. He was one of the most learned men of his day. He wrote extensively, but only his two Apologies for the Christians, addressed to the emperors, and senate, and people of Rome, and his Dialogue with Trypho, the Jew, have reached us. Before his conversion he was familiar with the various systems of pagan philosophy. In his writings he quotes extensively from the four Gospels, which he represents as a genuine and authentic record of Jesus Christ and his doctrine. He terms them "Christ's Memoirs," "Memoirs of the Apostles," etc. He farther testifies that the "Memoirs of the Apostles," etc., were read and expounded in the public service of the Christian Churches. He also expressly names, as sacred writings of the Christians, the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, the Epistle of Peter, and the book of Revelation, which, he says, "was written by John, one of the apostles of Christ."

Ascending now to the first century, our next witnesses are the Apostolic Fathers, as they are termed, or those Christian writers who were contemporary with the apostles. These are five in number—Barnabas, Clement, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp. The first and second named were co-laborers with St. Paul; and Hermas was also his contemporary, and is mentioned by him in the sixteenth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. Ignatius was Bishop of Antioch A.D. 70, and suffered martyrdom near the beginning of the second century. Polycarp, the immediate disciple of the Apostle John, was by him appointed Bishop of Smyrna: he also was martyred near the middle of the second century.

Although these Fathers have none of them professed to give a list of the New Testament writings, yet their testimony is very important. Instructed, as they had been, from the lips of the inspired apostles, and

that through a companionship of years, they could not be mistaken in any of the leading facts and principles of Christianity as taught by the prime ministers of our blessed Lord. Their position and writings, and the martyrdom with which several of them were crowned, sufficiently indorse their intelligence and integrity. These early Fathers, contemporary with the generation who witnessed the wonderful events of New Testament notoriety, have quoted and referred to the Acts of the Apostles, several of the Gospels, and most of the Epistles, styling them the "Scriptures," the "Sacred Scriptures," or "The Oracles of the Lord." Their manner of quoting and referring to these books is not only evidence that these works, corresponding with our present New Testament, were then extant throughout the Christian Church, but that their authenticity was not questioned. They were read everywhere in Christian assemblies, and reverenced as the revelation of God.

It is farther clear that some of the New Testament writings were quoted by contemporary apostles themselves. The Apostle Peter refers to the "Epistles" of his "beloved brother Paul," recognizing them as a portion of the "Scriptures."

As evidence that these writings were not only published in Judea at this early day, but that they were extensively circulated throughout the Roman Empire, we refer to the fact that these witnessing Fathers resided in places remote from each other. Clement lived in Rome, Ignatius and Theophilus in Antioch, Polycarp in Smyrna, Justin Martyr in Syria, Irenæus in France, Athenagoras in Athens, Origen in Alexandria, Tertullian in Carthage, Eusebius at Cesarea, and Augustin at Hippo. "Philosophers, rhetoricians, and divines—men of acuteness and learning—all concur to prove that the books of the New Testament were equally well known in distant countries, and received as authentic by men who had no intercourse with one another." (Horne's Introduction.)

Again, it is a fact well known that, during the first centuries of the Christian era, the Christian Church was infested with numerous heresies. The leaders of those erratic sects were generally learned and acute, and familiarly conversant with the philosophy and polemic divinity of their day. Although the writings of the New Testament were often palpably against these heretics, and they were thereby tempted to pervert and interpolate certain books, and to reject others which plainly condemned their errors, yet they never ventured to deny the existence of those writings, or that they were written by the persons whose names they bear. For illustration, Cerinthus, a contemporary of the Apostle John, was a Judaizing teacher, maintaining the neces-

sity of circumcision and the observance of the Mosaic law in the Christian Church; but because the Epistles of St. Paul were so directly antagonistic to his doctrines, Cerinthus and his followers denied that Paul was a divine apostle. But this fact not only proves that these Epistles of Paul then existed, but that they were held as of divine authority by the great body of the Church, who used them as such in their controversy against Cerinthus. As affirmed by Dr. Lardner, "Noetus, Paul of Samosata, Sabellius, Marcellus, Photinus, the Novatians, Donatists, Manicheans, Priscilianists, besides Artemon, the Audians, the Arians, and divers others, all received most or all of the same books of the New Testament which the Catholics or great body of the Church received, and agreed in the same respect for them, as being written by apostles, or their disciples and companions."

Another evidence of the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament is derived from the fact that, at an early day, these writings were translated into other languages. The Syriac, and one or more Latin versions, were made as early as the commencement of the second century. Now, as these versions are still extant, and correspond with our copies of the original, it follows that these sacred writings not only existed at that early period, but that the New Testament, as we now have it, is a genuine production of the apostolic age—in other words, these sacred records, as now read throughout the world, in nearly a hundred different languages, are the identical Scriptures which, in less than one century from the death of Christ, were read extensively throughout the East in the Syriac, and throughout Europe and Africa in the Latin language; hence, if these writings have been surreptitiously foisted upon the Church, it could not have been done subsequently to that period, but the fraud must have been perpetrated at an age so near the birthday of Christianity as to render the success of so silly and wicked an attempt a moral impossibility.

In conclusion, on this point we call attention to the testimony furnished by the *adversaries* of Christianity. The most prominent of these, during the second, third, and fourth centuries, were Celsus, Porphyry, Hierocles, and Julian.

Celsus was a learned philosopher, who flourished in the latter part of the second century.

Porphyry wrote about the middle of the third century, and was probably one of the ablest and most severe writers that ever wielded a pen against Christianity. He was well versed in philosophy and politics. He had doubtless read the New Testament, and had made himself well acquainted with both Syriac and Greek literature.

Hierocles, another learned antagonist, appeared against the Christians about the commencement of the fourth century. He gave evidence of familiar acquaintance with the New Testament, referring both to the Gospels and the Epistles, and never questioning their genuineness and authenticity.

Next on the arena, and the last we shall name, appears Julian, the apostate emperor. He ascended the imperial throne, as successor to Constantine the Great, in the year 361. He immediately renounced Christianity, and wrote with great zeal and virulence against it.

This formidable array of infidel philosophers, in their bold and rancorous assault upon Christianity, were firmly met and triumphantly vanquished by the learned Christian divines of that day. Origen, Eusebius, Augustin, Jerome, Cyril, and others, came forth in due time with masterly defenses of Christianity. From this controversy the most unanswerable arguments may be deduced in favor of the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament. Nearly all the books of this volume, as we now have them, were repeatedly referred to and extensively quoted, not only by the Christian Fathers, but by the above-named champions of infidelity. In this controversy, let it be distinctly noted, that no one of the combatants on either side ever so much as raised a question concerning the genuineness and authenticity of one single book of the New Testament. Now, we ask, what more indubitable evidence on the subject in hand *can* be demanded than is here furnished? Can it be supposed that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the Acts of the Apostles, and the apostolic Epistles, were *not* the genuine productions of the authors to whom they were ascribed, and that the very remarkable and numerous facts and events therein recorded and said to have taken place publicly, in the presence often of thousands of all classes, of both sexes, and of both friends and adherents, and foes and opponents, of the parties reporting them—can it be supposed that *these* were not real historic records, but fictitious stories, cunningly-devised fables, wickedly-invented falsehoods, or base forgeries, and yet, how passing strange! that these learned philosophers, living in the very age and countries in which these things must have publicly transpired, or these fictitious stories have been surreptitiously foisted upon the people—*can it be* that all these things could have occurred, and these learned and bitter enemies of Christianity not been able to detect the cheat? Or can we suppose that they knew it all, and yet —while laboring with all their might to crush the hated superstition—they never urged, but forgot to name, the very facts which would have accomplished so effectually their cherished object of overturning Chris-

tianity? He who *can* believe *this*, is a fit companion for lunatics or madmen!

Is it not undeniable that, if the history of Jesus, as given by the Evangelists and the other New Testament writings, were not genuine and authentic, Celsus, who wrote only a little over a century after Christ, must have known it? But he gives no such intimation—he hints no such plea; but he goes to work to ridicule and oppose the Christian religion, admitting all the essential facts of the evangelical record, and referring to them again and again as authentic history, almost in the very words of the Gospels. Had it been in his power to set aside these Gospel histories, either by showing that they were not written by the apostles of Christ, as they assume to have been, or that they contain false statements—that the events did not take place as therein recorded—would he not most gladly have done so? How easy would it have been for him to deny that "Jesus lived but a few years previous to his day; that the wise men came to worship him; that Herod massacred the children; that Jesus healed the sick, and the lame, and raised the dead; that he was baptized by John, and that the Holy Ghost descended upon him like a dove; that he foretold his own sufferings and resurrection; that he was betrayed and forsaken by his own disciples; that he was crowned with thorns, and a robe put upon him; that he drank the vinegar and the gall; that he was scourged and crucified; that he was seen by his disciples after his resurrection, and showed them his hands that were pierced!" How easily might Celsus have denied these accounts, had he suspected the genuineness and authenticity of the records! But *he expressly mentions and admits all these facts!*

How easily might Porphyry, in the middle of the third century, and Julian in the fourth, have denied the existence or the authenticity of the books of the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles, had they not known that they existed, or had they questioned their genuineness or authenticity! But they quote them freely as genuine and authentic records. As said by Lardner, "Porphyry, Hierocles, and Julian, bear a fuller and more valuable testimony to the books of the New Testament, and to the facts of the evangelical history, and to the affairs of Christians, than all our other witnesses besides. They proposed to overthrow the arguments for Christianity: they aimed to bring back to Gentilism those who had forsaken it, and to put a stop to the progress of Christianity by the farther addition of new converts; but in those designs they had very little success in their own times, and their works, composed and published in the early days of Christianity, are now a testimony in

our favor, and will be of use in the defense of Christianity to the latest ages."

When we think of the extensive learning and acknowledged acuteness of these renowned apostles of infidelity—when we reflect that they lived in the ages immediately succeeding the apostles—when we look at the many considerations leading to the conviction that *they* could not have been imposed upon as to the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament Scriptures—when we remember how determined and inveterate were their malice and opposition, and how untiring their efforts to subvert Christianity, and yet that *they* never dreamed of questioning that these books were written by the persons to whom they were ascribed, or that they contained an honest and faithful statement of real events as they occurred—when we look at all these facts, we almost blush for the arrogance, ignorance, and stupidity of those modern infidels, who have stigmatized these sacred books as fictions or forgeries. Let them first *prove* that all history of all nations is an illusive cheat; that Homer never sung in Greece; that Cesar never reigned in Rome, and that Cromwell never rebelled in England—till *then*, let them not think of denying, without the blush of shame, the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VII.

QUESTION 1. What two important questions are considered in reference to the New Testament?

2. How may it be proved that we have the correct canon of Scripture?

3. How do the Roman Catholics prove the canon?

4. What erroneous plan do some Protestants adopt on this subject?

5. How is the absurdity of both plans shown?

6. What is the only true plan on the subject?

7. What important rule on the subject has been laid down?

8. The testimony of what class of persons is most satisfactory on this question?

9. Is the testimony of Jews and pagans of any force whatever?

10. By what kind of evidence may it be shown that the writings of the New Testament are genuine and authentic?

11. Has any counter testimony been presented?

12. At what century does the author commence the testimony?

13. What catalogues of the fourth century are referred to?

14. What historian of this century is referred to?

15. What testimony of the third century is presented? What of the second?

16. What testimony is referred to in the first century?

17. What evidence is furnished by the heretics?

18. What evidence is derived from the fact that translations were made of the New Testament?

19. What testimony is furnished by the adversaries of Christianity?

20. By whom were these apostles of infidelity met and vanquished?

21. What important admission did these infidels make?

CHAPTER VIII.

AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES—INSPIRATION OF THE SACRED WRITERS—THE SENSE IN WHICH IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD.

In what sense are the Scriptures divinely inspired? It is a matter of importance that we be able properly to answer this question.

We may remark that the general belief on this subject was very harmonious in the Christian Church during the first and purest ages of her history. Until about the middle of the sixth century, we read of none, except notorious heretics, who disputed the *plenary* inspiration of the Scriptures. About that time, Theodore of Mopsuestia, a philosophical theologian, advocated some very loose and heterodox notions on the subject of inspiration.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, some of the Jewish Talmudists, who had become deeply imbued with the Aristotelian philosophy, began, after the fashion since adopted by some modern Christian divines, to classify different parts of Scripture under different degrees of inspiration. Maimonides numbered as many as eleven different degrees of inspiration. Gaussen testifies that "the modern German school of the adversaries of inspiration is but a reproduction of the rabbins of the thirteenth century." In the sixteenth century, Socinus and his followers assailed the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, asserting that the sacred writers sometimes failed in memory, and were liable to error in some of their statements.

In more modern times, Germany has been a hot-bed of infidelity in this insidious guise.

About a century ago Semler went so far as to renounce inspiration almost entirely, denying all prophecy, and explaining every miracle as an allegory. Afterward Ammon, Paulus, Eichhorn, DeWette, Huc, Michaelis, LeClerc, Rosenmüller, Coleridge, Morell, Schleiermacher, Renan, and a host of others, have followed on the same trail.

It has already been shown that Christ and his apostles not only claimed to speak with authority from God themselves, but also fully accredited the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old Testa-

ment. We now proceed more specifically to define the sense in which this inspiration should be understood.

1. Inspiration is so full and complete that the sacred writers are not the real authors of the books they penned. They, as it were, disappear, and God supplies their place; that is, the Scriptures are the word of God as really as were the "Ten Commandments," which were written by his own finger. In the one case God chose to write with his own finger, and in the other case he selected the sacred writers—Moses, Isaiah, Daniel, John, Peter, Paul, and others—as his amanuenses; but in both cases it is really God's writing—God's book—God's word. Every Christian knows and feels that in reading the Bible, while Isaiah, David, or Paul may be the organ of utterance, the word is from the mouth of God—it is God who speaks. To *God's* voice his reason bows, his conscience submits, and his inmost soul yields obeisance. To him the Bible—the Bible *as a whole*, from Genesis to Revelation—is a divine oracle. When the enrapt disciples gazed in adoring admiration upon their transfigured Lord, it was the whole Christ with whose glory they were filled. They did not separate from his sacred person the nails on his fingers or the hairs on his head, and ask: What have these to do with his resplendent majesty? So the Christian, when he clasps the Bible to his bosom, does not stop to ask, Of what special use is the book of Esther? or What glory is there in the Chronicles? These portions of Scripture are but little in themselves, but, like the single bud or leaf in the bouquet, or the single point in the landscape, they contribute to the symmetry and perfection of the magnificent whole.

2. Inspiration, in this plenary sense, is not contemplated as applying to the writers as a *personal illumination*, rendering them infallible and free from error, as individuals, but as a spiritual influence, guiding, directing, and controlling their tongues as they speak for God, or their pens as they write the Scriptures, so that all they thus speak or write shall be free from error, and just as God would have it; in a word, it is God speaking by, or through, the organs of John or Paul, or guiding his pen in every sentence, word, and letter. In the sense of *illumination*, inspired men differ from each other "as one star differs from another star in glory," or as they may have differed in taste, talents, or education; but in regard to *inspiration*, all were on a level. Some men were doubtless inspired on some occasions, and for special purposes, who were destitute of spiritual illumination, having no claims even to piety: instance the case of Balaam and of Caiaphas. These, though wicked men, were divinely inspired to utter truthful and sublime prophecies. In general, however, spiritual illumination and piety are com-

bined with inspiration in the same persons. Perhaps this union was in no case more forcibly exhibited than in Isaiah, John, and Paul. They were not only inspired to speak the truth of God, but were, in an extraordinary degree, devout and heavenly-minded; yet their writings are in no respect superior in authority to those of any other inspired author.

3. The inspired writers were only infallible in their *official capacity*, as "chosen vessels" to bear the message of God to men; in other respects, they were liable to err like other men. It matters nothing to us what erroneous notions Moses, Isaiah, Peter, John, or Paul may have entertained in relation to science, philosophy, politics, or any other subject, provided only that they were preserved from all error, as official teachers of the doctrines of God.

4. This inspiration did not destroy their *individuality*. They were not used by the divine Spirit as mere machines, so as thus to blot out or suspend their moral agency or intellectual character; hence we find in the inspired writers the same variety in style and manner by which other authors are distinguished. Because God inspires a Jew, we are not to expect him to write like a Greek, nor because he inspires a Greek are we to expect him to speak like a Jew; but the Jew will still be a Jew, and the Greek still a Greek. An illiterate fisherman, though inspired, will not speak in the style of a philosopher, nor the inspired philosopher in the style of an unlettered peasant; but each, though inspired, will still maintain his individuality, and speak in his own peculiar style. Surely we must allow that God may select, as his organs for the communication of his will, men from various walks in life, and guide the tongue and pen of each (so that precisely the things he desires shall be communicated), and yet not interfere with the peculiar style of the person selected. So that while in one place Paul is the writer, and in another case Peter or John, yet, in all cases, the book is *God's word*.

5. But, according to the view of inspiration we have presented, it seems the very *words*, as well as the *thoughts*, must have been inspired. This is precisely the doctrine we maintain. The Bible is the "word of God." What the Bible says, God says; what the Bible declares to be true, is true; what it declares to be right, is right; what it declares to be wrong, is wrong. What it teaches is to be believed, not on the authority of Moses, of Paul, or of other inspired men, but on the authority of God. The Bible is inspired, not as to *ideas* merely, but as to *words* also. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." St. Paul says: "Which things also we speak, not in the

words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the *Holy Ghost teacheth.*" (1 Cor. ii. 13.) We confess there are difficulties connected with this subject. We cannot conceive or explain the method of the Spirit's operation, either in conversion or in inspiration: but whither shall we go to escape from difficulties? — we find them everywhere and in every thing. It is objected that, "if the very words of Scripture are inspired, then there can be no human element about the matter—no diversity of style, or any thing of the sort." Not so; this inference does not follow. Cannot God make flowers, or trees, or mountains, or stars, unless he makes them all alike? If he inspires different men, must they all use the same language, be it Hebrew or Greek? Must every musician always perform on an instrument of the same kind, be it flute, harp, or drum? Why, we ask, cannot the Spirit guide each inspired man in the exercise of his own peculiar powers, whatever language he may speak, and whatever may be his character—whether he be gentle or fierce, learned or illiterate, infant or adult, refined or coarse, or whatever his peculiar style?

Another objection to plenary inspiration is, that "if this doctrine be true, then inspired men could never err, by mistake or otherwise." Hence, we are pointed, as a refutation of our doctrine, to the fact that Paul did not know that Caiaphas was high-priest (Acts xxiii. 5), or the number of persons he had baptized in Corinth (1 Cor. i. 16). If our position asserted infallibility as a personal attribute of the inspired men, then there would be some force in this objection; but as this infallibility is only affirmed of the inspired *writings*, not of the *writers*, the objection is quite irrelevant. The ignorance of Paul, as to the position of Caiaphas, or on any other point, is nothing against his plenary inspiration, as a sacred writer, so long as no error can be detected in his official teachings. It is for the *writings*, and not the *writers*, that infallibility is claimed.

6. Again, we are told that many things recorded by the sacred penmen were merely a recital of events that came under their own personal knowledge, and with which they were perfectly familiar—surely, it is urged, they needed no inspiration on these subjects; and as God's doings are never superfluous, we cannot suppose that in such cases the writers were inspired. Now, we demand, since the larger portion of the Bible is historical, and a great part of that history is recorded by men who had personal knowledge of the events they relate, must we not set aside, according to this objection, an important part of the Bible as a mere human production? Look at the history of the Israelites by Moses; but, above all, at the history of Jesus by the evangelists

Are these sacred records all to be classed as merely human? The very thought is revolting to the Christian heart. Admitting that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, had been eye-witnesses of many of the wonderful works of Jesus, and had listened to his many admirable sayings and discourses, and had drunk in with their own ears the heavenly precepts that fell from his lips, how preposterous the idea of depending on memory, after a lapse of years, for a record of these things! How could they, under these circumstances, remember so many events, so as to record them precisely as they occurred? How could they recall so many discourses, many of which they did not themselves comprehend at the time, so as to record them in the Saviour's exact language? It is utterly impossible. And even if they *could*, how could they distinguish what ought to be written from what ought to be omitted? Inspiration—*plenary* inspiration—was needed at every step—at every chapter, sentence, and word. It was needed to teach them *what* to write, and what *not* to write—to teach them *how* to write, and *when* to write—to teach them the thoughts to express, and the proper words to express those thoughts. It was needed for their own sake, to enable them to write as they did, and for the sake of the Church and the world, in all coming time, to give divine authority to the sacred record.

Abstract the idea of the inspiring Spirit guiding the pen of the sacred writer in every sentence, word, and letter, from the holy Gospels, and the heavenly unction—the divine power—of the book is gone. It is no longer the record of Heaven we trace—no longer the voice of God we hear. The Shekinah has left the mercy-seat; the divine sacrifice ceases to smoke upon the altar, and the glory has departed from the Christian temple.

But a truce forever to all conjecture and reasoning upon this great question. Our Saviour shall settle it himself. He has long ago settled it, and the Church for centuries has confided with satisfaction in his decision; and with this decision may her faith never be shaken by the assaults of skepticism! It reads thus: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John xiv. 26.

7. From what has been presented, we may clearly infer that all that has been said by certain divines concerning some parts of Scripture being inspired, and other parts not inspired, is not only without authority, but is manifestly repugnant to the Scripture view of the subject. The claim of inspiration made by the sacred writers refers, not to one portion of Scripture alone, but to every portion alike. The Bible

doctrine is, that not *a part* of Scripture, but "*All* Scripture, is given by inspiration of God." 2 Tim. iii. 16.

If the Old Testament was inspired, so was the New, and *vicè versa*. If the prophetical part was inspired, so was the historical, the didactic, and all the rest. There is no restriction, limitation, or exception, in these words of Christ: "And the Scripture cannot be broken;" (John x. 35;) nor in the words of Peter: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" (2 Pet. i. 21;) nor in these words of St. Paul: "Not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth;" (1 Cor. ii. 13;) nor yet in these words of Jesus: "He will guide you into all truth." (John xvi. 13.) This dividing of the sacred word in portions inspired, and portions not inspired, finds no word, or even hint, to favor it in all the Bible. Nor can it find any support in the primitive and purer ages of the Church. It is an invention of later times—it is a brood that was hatched amid the humid atmosphere of the dark ages, and has been new baptized in the muddy waters of modern rationalistic philosophy.

Nor is it much better—as some divines having higher claims to orthodoxy have done—to attempt to classify the different claims of inspiration. Thus, we are told of an inspiration of "superintendence," another of "elevation," and another of "suggestion." Now, if by this division nothing was implied but the simple fact that superintendence, elevation, and suggestion, are three important elements of inspiration in general, each entering more or less into every case of divine inspiration, these divisions would not only be harmless, but appropriate; but this is manifestly not the sense in which they are intended. As used by those who have adopted them, one scripture is supposed to be given by the inspiration of *superintendence*, another by that of *elevation*, and another by that of *suggestion*—thus, we are told that "Moses could record, without a divine afflatus, the deliverance of the Israelites from bondage and the history of their journeyings toward the promised land: so Solomon could remark that 'A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger;' or that 'Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.'" "In such cases as these," we are informed, "no supernatural influence was required to enlighten the mind of the writers"—that is, in all the wonderful record of the deliverance of God's people from their bondage in Egypt, and in all the eventful history of a "forty years'" journey from Egypt to Palestine, and in the best of the excellent Proverbs of Solomon, "no supernatural influence was required to enlighten the mind of the writers."

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Inspiration by "elevation," we are informed, "denotes that divine influence by which the mental faculties of the sacred writers, though acting in a natural way, were raised and invigorated to an extraordinary degree, so that their compositions were more truly sublime, noble, and pathetic, than what they could have produced merely by the force of their natural genius."

"Suggestion" is said to be "the highest degree of inspiration," and to include "all those direct revelations which were made to the sacred writers, of such things as they could not have discovered by ordinary means."

It must be admitted that thus to divide inspiration—assigning one kind to one scripture and another kind to another scripture—is perfectly gratuitous, having nothing in Scripture itself to authorize it. But this is not the worst: it tends to weaken the authority of the Bible, and to deprive it of much of its power over the heart and conscience. The Christian mind has long been trained to contemplate the Bible as the "word of God"—not of man. In this light the whole book has been viewed, whether it be prose in the plainest narrative style, or poetry of the most sublime strain. And if it be indeed the "word of God," and not the mere word of man, then it follows that every portion of it—each book, chapter, and verse—was given under the influence of plenary inspiration—an inspiration including, to some extent, all these elements—superintendence, elevation, and suggestion.

Let any one of the sacred writers, in any single production of his pen, be supposed destitute of divine inspiration—whether in the sense of superintendence, elevation, or suggestion—and that portion of Scripture must at once cease to be contemplated as "God's word:" it must be considered as a human production. Suppose, for instance, that we admit that the Mosaic history, or that of John the Apostle, was only given by the inspiration of "superintendence"—no divine "elevation" or divine "suggestion" about it, but simply the divine superintendence, so as to free it from all error—in what light must we then contemplate it? Would it not be, as to all its inherent elements, a mere human history? To be sure it would be a *true* history: of this we could have no doubt; but in what else could it differ from any other human history? Now, admit that any other author had produced a history, of which we were perfectly assured that every word it contained was true, would it not in our esteem, according to this view, be as much a divine production as the Mosaic history or the Gospel of John? The only difference we could perceive would be this: that Moses and John had recorded nothing but the truth, aided thereto by a divine superintend

ence, but some one else had written a history recording nothing but the truth, without that divine superintendence. Surely the method by which the truth, and nothing but the truth, is secured, cannot change the character of that truth. We may select paragraphs of history from many profane authors—of the truth of which it is impossible for us to doubt—but will that fact give to these scraps of profane history a sacredness and authority like unto what every sentence of the Bible possesses? Surely not. But if any portion of the Bible history has nothing to stamp it with divinity but simply the fact that God so superintended the writer as to prevent him from recording any thing but what was true, we cannot see what claim of divinity could pertain to such scripture that would not belong equally to the Principia of Newton, or any human composition, concerning the entire and absolute truthfulness of which we could have no doubt.

But, according to the Bible view of the doctrine of divine inspiration, there is a sacredness and a divine impress upon every sentence and word of Holy Writ infinitely beyond what any human composition can claim. Moses, John, and all the rest of Heaven's chosen amanuenses, in every sentence of the sacred canon which they penned, were aided, not only by the inspiration of "superintendence," freeing them from the possibility of mistake or error, but by the inspiration of "elevation" and "suggestion," lifting their thoughts infinitely higher than nature's pinions can soar, and causing them to clothe those thoughts in words more appropriate than human wisdom could select. And this is equally manifest, whether we listen to Isaiah when he prophesies of the glories of the Messiah, or simply speaks of "the vision of Isaiah, the son of Amos;" or to Paul when he speaks of the "abundance of his revelations," or simply of "the cloak which he left at Troas."

Hence we conclude that the Scriptures are all given by plenary inspiration, embracing throughout the elements of "superintendence, elevation, and suggestion," in so high a sense that the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is the infallible word of God—"one jot or tittle" of which can never fail, but which, when heaven and earth shall pass away, shall still remain, enduring as the throne of Him by whose Spirit it was inspired.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VIII.

QUESTION 1. How was inspiration understood by the primitive Christians?

2. When, and by whom, was this doctrine opposed?

3. By whom has it been opposed in more modern times?

4. In what sense should inspiration be understood?

5. How is this view sustained from Scripture?

6. Does it admit variety in the style of the sacred writers?

7. How can this admission be reconciled with the position that the *words* of Scripture are inspired?

8. What evil results from *classifying* the kinds of inspiration?

9. Is all Scripture inspired in the *plenary* sense?

PART II.—EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK II.—DIRECT EVIDENCE—EXTERNAL.

CHAPTER IX.

MIRACLES—DEFINITION CONSIDERED.

THE discussions in our preceding chapters have all been *preparatory* to the main question; that is, they only pave the way to the more *direct* evidences by which the truth of Christianity is established. In examining *these*—which we may style the evidences *proper*, in contradistinction from such as are only *preparatory*—we find that our various eminent authors have adopted different plans of classification.

Stackhouse makes *four* divisions of the evidences of Christianity:

1. The *character and behavior* of the person professing to deliver a revelation from God.

2. The *nature and tendency* of his doctrine.

3. The *signs* and *tokens* he gives of his divine commission.

4. The *success and effects* of his doctrine.

Richard Watson, following in the wake of Dr. Hill, divides the evidences of Christianity into three classes:

1. The *External*, including *miracles and prophecy.*

2. The *Internal*, derived from the consideration of the *doctrine* taught.

3. The *Collateral*, arising from a variety of circumstances which, less directly than the former, prove the revelation to be of divine authority.

The definition this author gives of *collateral* evidence is too *indistinct* to be of practical use, in a subject of this kind. According to his definitions, it will often be difficult to distinguish his *collateral* from his *external* or *internal* evidence; but it will be quite plain that his *collateral* may always be included under his definition of *external* or *internal* evi

dence Hence we dismiss the *collateral* division, as tending more to perplex than to assist.

It must not, however, be inferred, because our authors adopt different *divisions* on this subject, that they differ from each other as to the evidences themselves. It is true that they vary as to their mode of presenting the subject; and some attach most importance to one class of evidence, and others to another class; but there is little or no difference as to the evidences set forth in the various systems, and especially is there no contrariety or opposition.

In our classification of the evidences of Christianity we pursue that plan which has been the most generally adopted by our eminent authors, because we consider it the most natural and convenient; hence we will embrace these evidences in two grand divisions, viz.:

The EXTERNAL and the INTERNAL.

But even when we adopt this division, which we deem the most unexceptionable, there is danger of allowing the two classes to interlock or run into each other. To guard against perplexity which might arise from this source, we should be as clear and explicit in our definitions as possible, and then be careful to adhere to them in our investigations as strictly as the subject will admit.

We thus define our classes:

1. *External Evidence.*—By this we mean all that evidence which is derived, not from the character of the revelation itself, but from outward facts and circumstances, which, though many of them may be recorded in Scripture, yet they make not an essential part of its doctrinal system, and are susceptible of proof, in part, from profane history and collateral testimony. Under this division we embrace the evidence from *miracles*, *prophecy*, and the *success* of Christianity.

2. *Internal Evidence.*—By this we mean all that evidence which is derived from the nature of the doctrines, the consistency of the writers, and effects of Christianity. Or more at large, under this division we embrace the evidence derived from the *consistency* of the different parts of the Bible—the *excellency of its doctrines*, their accordance with human nature, their transforming influence upon the heart and life, and the internal assurance of their truth, which they, through the Spirit, impart to all who believe and obey them.

We are now prepared to enter upon the consideration of the *external* evidences of Christianity. We begin with the subject of *miracles*.

Among the arguments relied on for the truth of Christianity, none has been more prominently urged, or deemed more satisfactory and conclusive, than that which is founded on *miracles*. Fully conscious of

the potency of this argument, the enemies of Christianity have taxed, to the utmost extent, their ingenuity and skill to set aside or ward off its force; but with how little success, a careful, though brief, examination will enable us to judge. That we may see the evidence from this source in its true light, there are three points necessary to be closely considered and clearly presented.

The *first* point is the *definition*—we must have a clear conception of the character of a *real miracle.*

Secondly, we propose to show that such miracles are *susceptible of clear and satisfactory proof.*

In the *third* place, we propose to show that such miracles *were performed, by divine interposition, in attestation of the truth of the Jewish and Christian revelations.*

I. We inquire, *first, what is a miracle?* A clear and accurate conception of the definition will prevent confusion and perplexity in the investigation.

The first import of the word *miracle*, from the Latin *miraculum*, is *a wonder*, or *wonderful thing.* Webster defines a miracle thus: "In theology (a miracle is) an event or effect contrary to the established constitution and course of things, or a deviation from the known laws of nature; a supernatural event." The "New American Cyclopedia" defines a miracle to be "a work of divine power, interrupting (or violating) the ordinary course of nature, and directly designed to attest the divine commission of him who works the miracle."

Chrysostom says: "A miracle is a demonstration of the divine dignity." Augustin argues that a miracle is not against nature in its highest aspect; for "how is that against nature which comes from the will of God, since the will of such a great Creator is what makes the nature of every thing?" He adds: "In miracles, God does nothing against nature; what is unaccustomed may appear to us to be against nature, but not so to God, who constituted nature."

Aquinas says: "Miracles are all things done by divine power, beside the order commonly preserved in the course of affairs."

Lord Bacon asserts: "There never was a miracle wrought by God to convert an atheist, because the light of nature might have led him to confess a God; but miracles are designed to convert idolaters and the superstitious, who have acknowledged a Deity, but erred in his adoration, because no light of nature extends to declare the will and worship of God."

Spinoza says: "A miracle signifies any work, the natural cause of which we cannot explain after the example of any thing else to which

we are accustomed; or, at least, he who writes about or relates the miracle cannot explain it."

Miracles have been defined, "from their *cause*, as a work of direct divine energy; from their *characteristics*, as compared with natural events, as superseding or violating the ordinary laws of nature; from their immediate *effects*, as producing wonder, and an impression of the divine presence; and from their *final cause*, as designed, according to some, to evoke faith, and, according to others, to accredit the miracle-worker."

Horne defines a miracle to be "an effect or event contrary to the established constitution or course of things, or a sensible suspension or controlment of or deviation from the known laws of nature, wrought either by the immediate act, or by the assistance, or by the permission of God."

Dr. Samuel Clarke defines thus: "A miracle is a work effected in a manner unusual, or different from the common and regular method of providence, by the interposition of God himself, or of some intelligent agent superior to man, for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority of some particular person."

From the authorities above presented, it will appear that the writers upon this subject have deemed a correct conception of the import of the term *miracle* a matter of importance in the discussion. The definitions given vary but little in substance, except that some are more extended than others. The definition given by Dr. Samuel Clarke is, perhaps, more extended than any of the preceding, and is in perfect accordance with the acceptation of the term, as used by theologians generally; but his definition, as also most of those we have cited, seems to embrace more than the term itself necessarily implies.

If we attempt to analyze the term, it is clear that the first element in the import of miracle is, that it is a work of the *divine power*, and which nothing but the divine power can effect. For illustration, creation is a work which nothing but the divine power can effect; hence every manifestation of creative power embraces this element of the miraculous. But there is another element in the definition of a miracle, and that is, that this divine power be exerted, in a way, contravening the ordinary process of nature, or in opposition to the regularly-established order of things. Now it is clear that many things are done by the power of God, and which nothing but the divine power can effect, that are not miraculous. The planets are wheeled in their orbits; the influence of the seasons is kept up, and the forest and the field are clothed with verdure and plenty; and all this by the power of God.

which alone is adequate to the performance of these wonders; and yet there is no miracle in these wonderful displays of divine energy, simply because the power is exerted according to an ordinary established plan, which we style the order or laws of nature. To raise a dead Lazarus at a word is no more an exertion of the divine power than to cause the sun to rise in the east; yet the one is a miracle and the other is not, because the one is effected by an immediate exertion of power, in an extraordinary way, and the other by the exertion of the same power in the ordinary course of nature.

Again, although it may be true that all the miracles of Scripture were performed (according to Dr. S. Clarke's definition) "for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority of some particular person," yet it does not appear to us that these circumstances are essential to the nature of a miracle. We here beg leave to ask, How can we certainly know that God might not perform a miracle for some other purpose, of which we have no conception? And would not the same divine act, performed out of the ordinary plan, or in contravention of the regular course of nature, be equally miraculous for whatever purpose it may have been performed? We think, at the outset of this discussion, the term miracle should be divested of all extraneous encumbrances, and taken according to its own essential elements.

According, then, to our views of the import of the term, we define it thus: *A miracle is a work of God, which nothing but divine power can effect, performed in contravention of the ordinary course, or the laws of nature.*

With this definition of a *miracle* before us, we cannot question the validity and force of miraculous testimony. A miracle is, in effect, the testimony of God. It is the voice of God speaking through his mighty deeds. Just as we read the existence and attributes of Deity through the works of nature, so we may see "the finger of God" in the miracles he performs. As none but God can perform miracles, according to our definition, and as it is absurd to suppose that God should contradict, or work in opposition to himself, so it necessarily follows that he can neither perform himself, not permit any other being to perform a miracle in attestation of any thing but what he approves; and what he approves must be not only true, but right and proper. Hence we conclude that, if Christianity has been confirmed by real miracles, in the sense of our definition, it is established by evidence as satisfactory and convincing as the nature of the subject admits, or as any rational mind should demand.

We are persuaded that no intelligent deist *can* either doubt that God is able, should he please to do so, to reveal his will to man, or that he can confirm that revelation by the performance of miracles. Nor, so far as known to us, has any one questioned the validity of the evidence of miracles, when performed in our presence, and attested by our own senses.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IX.

Question 1. Have the various authors differed in the classification of the evidences of Christianity?
2. What is the plan preferred?
3. How are the two classes of evidence defined?
4. What is the first department of *external* evidence?
5. What are the three points to be considered in reference to miracles?
6. How has miracle been defined by different authors?
7. What is the correct definition?
8. Can any but God, or one empowered by him, perform a real miracle?
9. Is the evidence of miracles conclusive and satisfactory?
10. Is this evidence, when witnessed by our own senses, generally admitted to be conclusive?

CHAPTER X.

MIRACLES—HUME'S ARGUMENT.

About a hundred years ago, that shrewd and renowned Scotch metaphysician and champion of infidelity, David Hume, aiming a blow that would sap the foundation of Christianity, boldly advanced the theory that "no human testimony can have such force as to prove a miracle and make a just foundation for any system of religion;" and, although the rottenness of this position and the sophistry by which it was advocated have been fully exposed again and again by masterly hands, yet it still lives in the world, and once in awhile is unblushingly paraded by the advocates of modern infidelity.

Such has been the fame of Hume's argument against miracles, that scarce a treatise has appeared on the evidences of Christianity, since the first enunciation of that gilded sophism, in which it has not been brought upon the arena for discussion. We here call attention to it, not so much from any conviction of its intrinsic force as from the fact that it has occupied so conspicuous a place in this controversy that no treatise on the question can ignore it entirely without being viewed by many as incomplete.

We briefly state the substance of Mr. Hume's argument in his own words, thus: "A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined; and if so, it is an undeniable consequence that it cannot be surmounted by any proof whatever from testimony. A miracle, therefore, however attested, can never be rendered credible, even in the lowest degree."

In considering the argument here set forth against miracles, our first observation is this: It is in contradiction to the dictates of common sense. It implies that we ought not to believe a miracle, though confirmed by the most indubitable testimony of our own senses. His argument is this:

"A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature, and as a firm and

unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined; and if so, it cannot be surmounted by any proof whatever from testimony."

Omitting for the present several points in which the fallacy of this argument is manifest, is it not clear that it bears with equal force against testimony for miracles, whether it be the deposition of those who have witnessed them, or the direct testimony of our own senses to the fact? If, as Hume asserts, a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature, and these laws are so firmly established that no argument from experience can possibly surmount the evidence we have of their stability, does it not follow, not only that a miracle is incredible on any testimony of others, but also on the testimony of our own senses? If the laws of nature are so firmly proved not to be susceptible of suspension, change, or violation, that no evidence from experience can possibly surmount that proof, it is undeniable that the personal experience of our own senses is as fully excluded as the testimony of others. According to this argument, nothing *can* prove a miracle. It does not appear that Mr. Hume carried out his argument so as to assert that we ought not to credit our own senses, though we might, again and again, and under every variety of circumstances, witness with our own eyes, and ears, and hands, the performance of the most notable miracles; but it does appear, unquestionably, that his argument proves this, if it proves any thing at all. Indeed, this consequence is so undeniable that we think it could not have been repudiated by the author of the argument himself.

Hence we conclude that, as this argument necessarily leads us to discredit the evidence of our own senses, even when we have the most satisfactory reasons to believe that those senses can be under no illusive or deceptive influence, and as we can gain no knowledge of any kind, or from any source, in reference to which we have a firmer conviction that we are not deceived, than what we derive from the testimony of our senses, our own common sense teaches us that this argument, which would require us to discredit this knowledge altogether in application to miracles, must be fallacious.

In the next place, the argument in question, if conclusive against the proof of miracles, must be equally so against every thing new, coming under the head of the *marvelous*.

Miracles are incredible, says the argument, because they are against the testimony of experience. The word *experience*, as used by Mr. Hume, must mean, either our own *individual* experience, the experience

of *the whole world*, or the experience of *the world generally*. It could not have referred to the first named, for then we ought to admit nothing whatever on the testimony of others—it could not mean the experience of *the whole world*, for there are no means of ascertaining what that has been; the meaning, then, must be, that miracles are contrary to the experience of *the world generally*.

Now, is it not clear that if I am bound to discredit all human testimony for a miracle, because no such thing has been witnessed by the world generally, I am under obligation to reject every thing new and marvelous? Let this mode of reasoning be adopted, and what must be the fate of every new discovery in science—in astronomy, geology, philosophy, or the arts? When any of these are for the first time brought forth, might not every tyro in knowledge sit in judgment upon them, and condemn them "without farther examination?" Might he not exclaim: "These are contrary to experience—who ever heard of them before?—and they are not in accordance with the known laws of nature; hence we must reject them."

Thus, according to this reasoning, all extraordinary phenomena in nature—all uncommon efforts of memory or of genius—all the wonders of magnetism, galvanism, and electricity—the newly developed mysteries of the telegraph—the reported descent of meteoric stones—all these things we must reject, if, according to this argument, our faith is to be circumscribed by the general experience of the world.

If what has never been experienced is never to be believed, what must have been the situation of man at the beginning of the world? and how suddenly would the wheels of progress now cease to revolve, were we to admit the maxim, that every thing unknown to the experience of the past ought to be rejected as not worthy to be believed by men of sense!

We can see no good reason why miracles should not be susceptible of proof, as well as every other class of facts. That God is able to perform them, none will dispute. And what, we ask, is there in the character of God rendering it improbable that he should, on suitable occasions, thus display his power? If it be reasonable—as proved in a former chapter—that God should reveal his will to man, what evidence could be selected so direct and satisfactory, in confirmation of that revelation, as the utterances of God in a miracle?

Mr. Hume's argument seems to suppose that the "laws of nature," as he terms them, possess an abstract existence, and are so unbending in their character that, if even the divine power were capable of suspending or changing them, no evidence could be given that would jus

tify man in believing the fact. But surely this learned metaphysician knew that the "laws of nature" are no abstract essence. All we mean by the phrase is, the method by which God usually governs his creation. These laws are the creature of the divine will, and why may not that will suspend or modify them at pleasure? It is no more difficult for God to work a miracle than to cause the grass to grow. It is as easy for Him who rules over all to speak to the raging storm, "Peace, be still!" and it shall instantly be calmed, as to fan the face with the gentle breeze. Miracles are only improbable, as they are unusual; but because they are not every-day occurrences, that is no reason why we should not accredit them when they do occur, and are sufficiently attested. Miracles are not contrary to the "laws of nature," in the real and full sense of the word, but are only over and above those laws, as they appear to us. They are not so with the Deity—they are not so in such sense as to imply that an effect is produced without an adequate cause. The difference between an ordinary event and a miracle is, that in the former a natural cause operates, which we may perceive, and, to some extent, comprehend; but in the latter a supernatural cause, whose operations we have not witnessed before in that way, and, though its presence may be known by its effects, yet the manner of its causative connection with the physical effect is concealed from our view.

That miracles may be proved by human testimony, in opposition to Hume's argument, we might safely leave to the verdict of common sense, before any jury of intelligent, unprejudiced persons. We will present the case, as given by Mr. Paley in his answer to Hume's theorism, thus: "If twelve men, whose probity and good sense I had long known, should seriously and circumstantially relate to me an account of a miracle wrought before their eyes, and in which it was impossible that they should be deceived—if the governor of the country, hearing a rumor of this account, should call these men into his presence, and offer them a short proposal, either to confess the imposture or submit to be tied up to a gibbet—if they should refuse with one voice to acknowledge that there existed any falsehood or imposture in the case—if this threat were communicated to them separately, yet with no different effect—if it was at last executed—if I myself saw them, one after another, consenting to be racked, burnt, or strangled, rather than give up the truth of their account—still, if Mr. Hume's rule be my guide, I am not to believe them. Now I undertake to say that there exists not a skeptic in the world who would not believe them, or who would defend such incredulity."

But wherein, it may be asked, consists the flaw in Mr. Hume's argu-

ment? We reply, that his argument is mainly defective in two particulars:

First. In pretending to balance between two experiences, measuring that by which the laws of nature are established, and that by which men's veracity is established, against each other; whereas he is only in reality balancing *total inexperience* on the one hand, against *positive experience* on the other.

Secondly. The fallacy of the argument, as we judge, mainly consists in his blending together in the same category all kinds of testimony, both good and bad.

We conclude our notice of his argument by a brief exhibit of these fallacies.

First. We call attention to his balancing between two experiences, thus: He argues that we cannot prove a miracle, because it implies a violation of the laws of nature, and these are established by the unalterable experience of the world. This he would balance against our experience of the character of human testimony; and finding, from the experience in reference to the laws of nature, that they never fail or vary, but, from our experience in reference to human testimony, that it has often failed and deceived us, he concludes against the possibility of proving a miracle by human testimony.

To show clearly that while he thus speaks of two opposite experiences, which he would balance against each other, he is really only balancing *experience* against *inexperience*, we will illustrate the subject by a supposed case of fact. Now, admit that A is charged with having murdered B in the senate-chamber of the United States, at a certain hour of a certain day in a specified year. Twelve men depose that they were present at the time and place specified, and witnessed the act as charged. Now, we have the certified experience of these twelve men, convicting A of the crime of murder. But the counsel for A propose that they will neutralize the evidence against their client by arraying an equal amount of experience acquitting him of the crime. Now, we ask, will it do for them to bring forward the testimony of twelve men who were not present at the time and place specified, but who are ready to depose that they never witnessed the crime charged against A? Of what avail would ten thousand such testimonies be against the depositions of those who were present and witnessed the act? Is that balancing experience against experience? Surely this negative testimony amounts to nothing against affirmative evidence! This is *experience* on the one hand, against *inexperience* on the other.

But is it not the same kind of balance we have in the argument

against miracles? Let us examine. Twelve men depose that they saw, at a certain time and place, a dead man raised to life at the word of another. Now, if we propose to neutralize the testimony of these twelve witnesses, must we not do it by arraying against them twelve others who were present at the time and place, and saw no such thing? The evidence of ten thousand persons who were not present at the time and place, can be of no avail. Their testimony can only amount to this, that they have never witnessed any thing of the kind. As to the fact alleged, all their *experience* amounts to a *total inexperience*. It may be true that neither they nor any one else had ever witnessed any thing of the kind, and yet the testimony of the twelve men affirming to the fact, may also be true: there is no contrariety in the evidence. The inexperience of millions, who never witnessed a given fact, cannot neutralize the evidence of such as depose that they did witness it. It is the same principle, so far as the balancing of testimony is concerned, whether the fact in question be miraculous or merely natural. The testimony must stand or fall on its own merits. To assume that a miracle is against universal experience, is merely to beg the question; for that is the precise point in controversy. To set up general experience, which can only testify that men generally have never witnessed such things, may answer a purpose as far as it goes; but it cannot affect the question at issue, since it is not contended that miracles have been common in the world, for then they would have ceased to be such. The point in controversy is this: Was a certain miracle performed at a given time and place? The testimony in favor of miracles, when clear, explicit, ample, and conclusive, cannot be set aside by mere negative proof, whatever may be its amount or character. To proceed upon that principle, would be to ignore, on religious questions, all the principles of evidence and the rules of reasoning on all other subjects.

We now call attention to the last point proposed—the manner in which Mr. Hume's argument blends together testimony of all sorts, placing *good* and *bad* in the same category. Here, we think, is to be found the greatest defect in this noted argument. As a miracle implies, according to the argument, that either the laws of nature have been violated, or human testimony has proved false, Mr. Hume proves, by the testimony of experience, that no miracle has been wrought. Now, he argues that our experience in the truth of testimony is not so uniform as our experience in the constancy of nature. Here he contemplates all kinds of testimony in the gross; and finding that testimony has often been deceptive, he infers that the testimony deposing to the miracle in

question is not to be relied on, because we have often experienced the falsehood of testimony, but have never experienced a violation of the laws of nature. Hence, as he argues, a miracle never can be established by human testimony. Now, we ask, is not this making all testimony, however good and reliable, responsible for the defects of all other testimony, however false or deceptive? The argument is substantially this: *One kind* of testimony has often proved false; therefore *another kind* of testimony, which has never proved false, is not to be relied on —that is, a *rogue* has often deceived me; hence I ought not to trust an *honest man*, who has never deceived me. If two things are essentially different in their nature, to prove a defect in the one will not necessarily involve th other in the same defect; but this is the character of the reasoning before us.

The argument of Mr. Hume against the character of testimony, is precisely the same as if he had grouped all animals together, and condemned and punished the innocent and harmless for the mischief perpetrated by the vicious and ferocious. For illustration: The wolf, the tiger, the panther, and the hawk, according to the general experience of the world, have often been found injurious, ferocious, and destructive to the welfare, peace, and happiness of man; therefore the calf, the lamb, the domestic fowl, and the turtle-dove, must be condemned and exterminated, notwithstanding their admitted proverbial innocence and harmlessness, for the crimes of those ferocious and vicious animals in whose company they have been classed! You must never trust your child to play with the gentle lamb, to caress his beautiful bantam, or to place the innocent dove in his bosom, for the wolf, the tiger, the panther, and the hawk, have often been known to prey upon innocent and unprotected children—to pick out their eyes, or to tear their tender flesh to pieces! It is true, the calf, the lamb, the chicken, and the dove, are essentially different in their nature from the wolf, the tiger, the panther, and the hawk; but what of that? They are all *animals*—they are all grouped together in the same category; and as we have often experienced that *animals* are vicious and ferocious, therefore *animals* are not to be trusted. Because we have often experienced that a *certain kind* of animals has injured us, therefore we ought not to trust a certain *other kind* that was never known to do us harm!

This is precisely the logic of Mr. Hume. We have changed the term *testimony*, and substituted for it the term *animals*, in order to exhibit more clearly the fallacy of the argument, but the logic is identical in both cases. Mr. Hume groups together *good* and *bad* testimony—that kind which is honest, full, conclusive, and satisfactory, having every

mark of truth, and which we have never experienced to be false, with that other kind which is deceptious, incomplete, indecisive, and unsatisfactory, having every characteristic of falsehood, and which we have never experienced to be true! Now, we undertake to affirm that the diversity in the characteristics of the different kinds of animals which we have classed together is no more essential and striking than that between the different kinds of testimony in the argument under review. Stripped of its sophistical garb, we here see the real fallacious character of that far-famed argument by which it was boasted that the world was to be redeemed from superstition, and men of sense taught to turn away from all proof of miracles, "without examination, as more properly a subject of derision than of argument."

Did Mr. Hume perceive this flaw in his argument, or did he not? If he did not, it argues but little for his perspicacity; if he did, and designedly slurred it over, it argues more for the malignity of his heart than for the honesty of his purpose. We allow Mr. Hume to assert, as confidently as he pleases, that "we have never experienced a violation of the laws of nature;" but we affirm, with an equal degree of confidence, that we—yea, the world—have never experienced the falseness of that kind of testimony by which the miracles of Scripture have been proved; nor can we perceive it possible how such testimony could be false; but we can very readily perceive it possible, and even probable, that God, the author of nature and of nature's laws, should suspend or hold in check his own laws, by the intervention of a higher law, for the glorious purpose of attesting the revelation of his will to his dependent, accountable creatures.

Having said what we deemed expedient in regard to Mr. Hume's argument, considered in reference to its intrinsic merits, we close the subject by calling attention to his inconsistency. In a note appended to his Essay on Miracles, he has recorded the following words:

"Suppose all authors in all languages agree, that from the first of January, 1600, there was a total darkness all over the earth for eight days—suppose that the tradition of this event is still strong and lively among the people—that all travelers bring us accounts of the same tradition, etc.—*it is evident that our philosophers ought to receive it for certain.*" Now mark! these words are a part of the same Essay in which it is recorded: "A miracle, supported by any human testimony, is more properly a subject of derision than of argument." "No kind of testimony, for any kind of miracle, can possibly amount to a probability, much less to a proof!"

Here we have a clear and explicit condemnation of his own argument

against miracles; but, stranger still, he immediately proceeds to condemn his own concession:

"But should this miracle be ascribed to any new system of religion, men in all ages have been so imposed upon by ridiculous stories of that kind, that this very circumstance would be full proof of a cheat, and sufficient with all men of sense, not only to make them reject the fact, but even reject it without farther examination."

It now appears that this celebrated essayist against the miracles of the Bible exhibits himself in several antagonistic attitudes.

He *first* informs us that miracles *cannot* be proved by any kind of human testimony whatever. He next affirms that miracles *can be proved;* and he gives an instance in which even philosophers would be bound to receive the proof as *certain.* He lastly asserts that this same testimony, by which a miracle is proved to be *certain,* in the judgment of *philosophers, if applied to the subject of religion,* should be "rejected as a cheat by all men of sense, without examination." That so acute and penetrating a metaphysician as Hume should so palpably contradict himself in so short a space, is really marvelous, and can only be accounted for by the admission of the fact, that his malignity against Christianity had supplanted his reason by prejudice. What but prejudice could lead him to affirm that a fact, though proved by such testimony that even philosophers are obliged to admit its certainty, *if applied to the support of religion,* that moment ceases to be true, and should 'be rejected as a cheat"? How can the use to which a fact is applied either change the character of the fact or of the testimony by which it has been established? For this tergiversation of Hume we can find no parallel, unless it be in that inconsistency of the Jesuits, by which they asserted that "what is *true* in philosophy may be *false* in theology." But what plea does Mr. Hume set up as an apology for such contradiction and absurdity? Simply this: that "men in all ages have been so imposed upon by ridiculous stories of that kind, that this very circumstance would be full proof of a cheat." Wonderful logic! The world has long been imposed upon by *falsehoods;* therefore nothing should be received as *true,* however it may be demonstrated! The community has long been humbugged by empiricism and quackery in medicine; therefore every principle of the science should be rejected, without examination! The country has been long flooded with counterfeit currency; therefore no coin should be received as genuine, however indubitable the evidence! The world has long been "imposed upon by ridiculous stories" of *false* miracles, destitute of real proof; therefore men of sense should "reject, without examination," all accounts of

genuine miracles, however well authenticated by the most *indubitable evidence!* Had Newton or Locke, Bacon or Boyle, Samuel Clarke or Richard Watson, or any of the renowned defenders of Christianity, perpetrated so glaring an outrage upon sound reasoning as *this*, they never could have gained the reputation they have secured as sound philosophers and able logicians; but this champion of infidelity may blunder on with a volume of sophistry, and coolly enunciate the most palpable absurdities and contradictions, yet, since he has boasted that he has set forth an argument that "will be useful to overthrow miracles as long as the world endures," his modern satellites unblushingly laud him to the skies as a paragon of perfection, both as to the acuteness of his perception, and the soundness of his logic!

Have these wiseacres of the present day—who flaunt themselves as disciples of Hume—discernment to appreciate the logic and consistency of their renowned master? If they *have*, they will blush with shame and abandon the cause of infidelity, or seek some other leader; if they *have not*, they should be left to "glory in their shame"! To combine so much sophistry in so brief an argument as that of Hume against miracles, required an ingenuity for which it is difficult to find a parallel, except in the degree of assurance with which the renowned sophism has been paraded.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER X.

QUESTION 1. What is the substance of Hume's argument against miracles?

2. What is the first-named objection to his argument?

3. Does his argument bear equally against miracles, whether witnessed by our own senses, or confirmed by testimony?

4. What is the next objection to his argument?

5. How may it be shown that his argument would disprove every thing new and marvelous?

6. Wherein consists the *ambiguity* of the term *experience*, as used by Hume?

7. How are the laws of nature properly defined?

8. In what sense are miracles contrary to the laws of nature?

9. What is the verdict of common sense as to the character of the evidence of miracles?

10. What are the two capital flaws in Hume's argument?

11. How may it be shown that his argument balances *experience* against *inexperience?*

12. How is it shown that Mr. Hume absurdly blends together *good* and *bad* testimony?

13. If Mr. Hume perceived this flaw in his argument, what must we infer? What, if he did not?

14. Wherein was Hume glaringly inconsistent with himself?

CHAPTER XI.

MIRACLES—THE CHARACTER OF THEIR TESTIMONY.

In the preceding chapter we so far advanced in the discussion of the subject of miracles as to show that they are susceptible of proof from human testimony, whether that testimony be derived through the medium of our own senses or the affirmations of others who profess to have witnessed them. We now proceed to examine the connection between the *truth* of a real miracle and the *truth* of that system or doctrine in whose support it has been performed.

In reference to the question now proposed, there are three distinct theories which have each been advocated by some of our ablest theologians.

The *first* is: That real miracles, when certainly performed, are an absolute and indubitable evidence of the truth of the doctrines and testimony of those who perform them, without taking into consideration the nature of the doctrine or of the testimony to be confirmed.

The *second* theory is: That miracles are only conclusive evidence when the doctrines of whose truth they are given as tests do not inculcate as virtues, cruelty, deceit, or licentiousness, or what we know to be wrong; or proclaim as truths that which we certainly know to be historical or mathematical falsehoods; but, on the other hand, are characterized throughout by a pure and unchanging morality and a sacred regard for truth.

A *third* theory, claiming Dr. Chalmers as its patron, occupies a mid dle ground between the two already stated. It takes the position, tha a miracle is not in all cases the seal of an attestation from God, but i only so when the doctrines it is used to confirm are free from all immorality and falsehood. This view differs from the second theory given only by requiring in the doctrines to be confirmed no *affirmative* moral characteristics whatever in order to give validity to their proof by miracles. The second theory not only requires the doctrines in question to be freed from immorality and falsehood, but also to present an *affirmative* exhibition of pure morality.

Dr. Chalmers has been the principal defender of the third scheme. He contends that all that is indispensable is, that the positive defects of immorality and falsehood be removed, and then, but *not till then*, miracles are a valid proof of the truth of the doctrines. His own words are: "We cannot, on the one hand, defer to the claims of a professed revelation, even though offered on the sanction of miracles, to have God for its author, if malignity and falsehood be graven upon its pages; and why? Because all our preconceptions of the Deity are on the side of his benignity and his faithfulness. We, on the other hand, could most readily surrender to it our faith and our obedience, if after having witnessed or been convinced of its miracles, we saw that through all its passages it was instinct with the purest morality; and why? Because if the discordancy between its characteristics and our previous notions of the character of God led us to reject the first, even in spite of the miracles that accompanied it, so the accordancy between its characteristics and these previous notions of the divine character lifts, as it were, the burden of this deduction off from the miracles, and leaves to them all that force and authority which properly belong to them. A revelation might be imagined which offered to our notice no moral characteristics whatever—which touched not at all on an ethical subject or principle of any kind—which confined itself to the bare announcement, we shall suppose, of facts relative to the existence of things that lay without the sphere of our own previous observation or knowledge, but withal having miracles to which it could appeal as the vouchers for its authenticity. Would miracles alone, it might be asked, having neither an evil morality in their message to overcast their authority nor a good morality to confirm it—would these alone substantiate the claims of a professed revelation? We hold that they would." Again he adds: "We would reject a professed revelation charged either with obvious immorality or falsehood, even though in the face of undoubted miracles. Let the doctrine have immorality or obvious falsehood attached to it, and then it is insusceptible of being proved by miraculous evidence to have come from God. We require the immorality and falsehood to be removed from the doctrine—not to prove it, but to give it the susceptibility of being proved."

The only part of this view of Dr. Chalmers from which we are compelled to dissent is this, that we should reject the testimony of miracles unless we first satisfy ourselves that the doctrines it is used to confirm do not embody immorality or falsehood. In the brief extracts we have made from his writings, this idea, with slight change of phraseology, is several times expressed. We can see very little difference

between the theory of Dr. Chalmers and the second one, as given just previously. They both require an investigation of the doctrines which miracles are to test before we can determine whether they are susceptible of proof by miracles or not. It is true that the examination required by the position of Dr. Chalmers seems not so extended as that demanded by the second theory. The doctrines, according to Dr. Chalmers, are only to be examined *negatively* to see that they teach no immorality or falsehoods. According to the other theory, they must be scrutinized both *negatively* and *affirmatively* to see that they are not only free from the *defects* specified but that they are characterized by *positive* excellences worthy of the perfections of God.

Now, it seems to us that the same investigation which would enable us to find out whether or not the revelation were encumbered by the "disturbing force" of the defects would also evince whether or not it contained the requisite excellences. If the one scheme proves the miracles by the doctrines and the doctrines by the miracles, so does the other. In each case the argument runs in the same "circle," and this objection to it cannot be evaded. The objections to both these theories are substantially the same. In order to render miracles a proof of revelation, they require man to possess more exalted powers than belong to his nature. He must know, according to these theories, what a divine revelation ought to be before he can decide from any evidence of miracles that it has been given. He must first examine it, not in part only, or in gross, but in whole and in *minutia;* for if it contains "immorality or falsehood," it is "not susceptible of proof from miracles." Should this revelation contain ten thousand chapters, and we carefully examine ninety-nine hundred and ninety-nine, and leave but one chapter unexamined, we cannot admit the proof of miracles; for though in our whole examination we may not have been able to detect a single "immorality or falsehood," yet how can we know what may be in that single chapter which we have not examined? A single defect may lurk therein which, when once discovered, will completely nullify all that miraculous testimony on which we had confidently relied. And farther yet, though we had examined every chapter of the revelation, finding none of the specified defects, still we could not be sure that we ought to admit the proof of miracles; for in a second examination we might discover what would then strike us as very obvious defects, such as it is urged would be "barriers" to the testimony of miracles, but which, in the first examination, had escaped our notice. And farther still, if these theories be true, after we have gone through several examinations with our utmost care, detecting no "immorality

or falsehood," we must still be left in doubt—for we are not infallible, we are weak and ignorant, poorly capable, independent of revelation, of deciding what morality or truth is. What will appear to one man as all right and true, often appears to another to bear the marks of "obvious immorality or falsehood."

Apply this principle of testing the force of miraculous testimony by the character of the doctrines it is intended to confirm to some of the Scripture miracles, and it may easily be seen how it divests all those "mighty works" of Christ and his apostles, and of those "holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," of all their native dignity and power. The sea is divided by the stretching forth of a rod; the flinty rock is smitten in the parched desert, and the waters gushed forth; Elijah prays, and fire from heaven falls upon his sacrifice; Daniel bows in supplication to God, and the lions' mouths are stopped; the Saviour speaks the word, and a dead Lazarus comes forth from the tomb; the apostles pray at Pentecost, and the Holy Ghost descends in his miraculous gifts. Now all these obvious miracles were calculated to arrest the attention and to strike instant conviction to the minds of all who witnessed them that they were wrought by the "finger of God." But, according to Dr. Chalmers, these miracles are no proofs of the manifestation of the divine power, unless the doctrines taught by those who perform them are free from "the disturbing force of obvious immorality and falsehood." Then, after having witnessed the wonderful miracles of Moses with our own eyes, we must suspend our faith till we examine his doctrines, in all their minute details, before we can accredit his miraculous doings as tests of his divine commission; we must attend carefully to the matter of Elijah's bold reproofs and startling appeals before we can distinguish the works of "Elijah's God" from those of an evil spirit; we must study and learn the character of Daniel's predictions ere we can tell whether he was delivered from the lions by an evil spirit or by the interposition of the "Lord God whom he served;" we must first sit in judgment on the Saviour's teachings, from first to last, before we can know whether it was through the "Father who sent him" or through Beelzebub that he controlled the powers of nature; and we must acquaint ourselves with all the apostles' doctrine before we can know whether their commission was from above or from beneath.

It need not be argued that these revolting consequences do not follow from the theories we are here opposing. We know they did not in the minds of the advocates of these schemes, and would not be admitted by them as legitimate consequences; yet we contend that their position

necessarily involves them. Miracles are either direct, immediate, and infallible proofs of the divine interposition, or they are not. If they *are*, then, so soon as we are certainly assured of their reality, their testimony is complete, and we are bound to receive as divine revelation all those things in confirmation of which they were performed; but if they *are not*, then the validity of miracles as a proof is suspended in doubt until the doctrines which they were given to confirm are understood. Unless these doctrines are understood, how can it be known whether the testimony of miracles is *neutralized* by the "disturbing force" of "obvious immorality or falsehood," or *canonized* by the absence of any such "barriers"? The system of Dr. Chalmers, as expressed in his own words, "instead of holding all religion as suspended on the miraculous evidence," represents "this evidence itself standing at the bar of an anterior principle, and there waiting for its authentication."

We are convinced of the truth of the position given in the first theory cited, "That real miracles, when certainly performed, are an absolute and indubitable evidence of the truth of the doctrines and testimony of those who perform them, without taking into consideration the nature of the doctrine or the testimony to be confirmed." If we be asked, But what if those doctrines teach palpable immoralities or falsehood? We reply, That is utterly impossible! In Dr. Chalmers's own words: "It is enough to cut short this perplexity, that God cannot lie, and that we should not waste our intellects on the impossibilities of an airy and hypothetical region." Let real miracles, in all cases, when once we are satisfied that they have actually been performed, be regarded as the distinct utterances of God exhibited in the omnipotent doings of his manifested hand, and we will fully accredit their testimony at once, having no more apprehension that they may be used in testimony of "immorality or falsehood" than that the voice of God himself, addressing us from out a burning bush, or direct from the opening heavens, should assert what is false, or command what is wrong.

It yet remains to bring the question we have been here discussing to the *test of the Scriptures*. Those who depreciate the testimony of miracles, considering it in the abstract, not absolute and unequivocal, generally endeavor to strengthen their position by appealing to the Bible record concerning the Egyptian magicians in the days of Moses, the demoniacal possessions of the New Testament, the raising of Samuel by the Witch of Endor, and one or two other texts from which it is inferred that other agencies beside that of God may sometimes perform miracles

As to the Egyptian magicians who attempted to imitate the miracles of Moses, it is sufficiently clear that they wrought no *real* miracles. Whether their feats were performed by mere sleight of hand, accompanied by magical incantation, or by satanic agency, or by a combination of both, is not important for us to determine. The terms used in describing their efforts do not imply, as some suppose they do, that the magicians *did the thing* which Moses did, but merely that they *did so;* that is, something of like *sort*, or *resembling* what Moses had done. This will be more evident when we remember that the same expression is used when the failure of their attempted imitation is described: "They *did so* to bring forth lice, but they could not." That all the performances of the magicians were but deceptive imitations, is farther evident from the fact that they were so soon baffled in their attempts, and constrained to confess "the finger of God." If they could perform one miracle, why not another? or why desist their effort so suddenly, and confess their defeat? The solution is, that Moses had performed a miracle which their arts of deception were unable to conterfeit. Had they been *real* miracle-workers, surely it was no greater miracle to produce the *lice* than to produce the *frogs* or the *blood*, but their deceptive arts could not so well practice with the one as with the other.

As to the raising of the spirit of Samuel by the Witch of Endor, we must admit that a notable miracle was here performed. But by whom? Not by the Witch of Endor, but by the Lord Jehovah. The witch was alarmed when Samuel appeared. God saw proper just at that juncture to perform a miracle to the overwhelming of the enchantress with confusion, and for the purpose of reproving the wickedness of King Saul.

In the case of Job, and of the demoniacal possessions of the New Testament, we see no evidence whatever that miracles were performed, or even attempted, by any of these evil spirits. Satan was allowed, it is true, grievously to afflict Job, but it was by special permit from Heaven. He possessed not even *that* power of himself He could only go the length of his chain.

The evil spirits spoken of in the New Testament, of whom numbers in that day were said to be possessed, like Satan in the case of Job, were allowed greatly to torment the bodies of their unhappy victims. They could cause them to foam at the mouth, and tear their clothes and their flesh through madness. But there is nothing miraculous in such things as these. They perform no startling wonders. They never healed the sick or raised the dead. Indeed, they had no power to enter a human body except as given them by the Almighty, nor could

they so much as enter the Gadarene swine without express and formal permission.

Again, some have thought that from the prediction of our Saviour in reference to the coming of "false Christs and false prophets," they may legitimately infer that these wicked impostors would wield miracle-working power; but this is a most unwarrantable inference. The language of the Saviour is: "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect." Now, we venture to affirm that the only miracle that can be established on this subject is that performed by the Saviour in uttering the prediction. What are these "signs and wonders" which "false Christs and false prophets" are to exhibit? Are they *real* miracles? If so, what were they? *where* and *when* were they performed? and show us the evidences of their authentication. One of them promised to divide the Jordan, but was slain by the Roman soldiers ere he had performed the task. Another promised that the walls of Jerusalem should fall down, but his followers were soon put to the sword by the Roman Governor. Another promised to divide the sea, and, having led many of his deluded followers to death, hid himself through shame and fear. And these are the "wonders" quoted to prove that miracles are not absolute tests of the divine power. *Their* "signs and wonders" were not miracles, but, as described by St. Paul, "they were after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and *lying* wonders."

Finally, that miracles are a direct and absolute proof of the doctrines and testimony in behalf of which they are performed, we will now show from the Scriptures themselves. It may readily be seen, from both the Old and New Testaments, that the inspired writers, so far from considering miraculous evidence a secondary and dependent kind of testimony, "standing at the bar of an anterior principle, and there waiting for its authentication," ever appealed to miracles as the most direct and indubitable proof of the truth of any doctrine, or of the divine mission of any person in whose behalf they have been performed.

To give but one example from the Old Testament, look at the contest of Elijah with the false prophets of Baal, an account of which is recorded in the eighteenth chapter of the first book of Kings. In the days of Ahab—that wicked king of Israel who, with a profanity hitherto unparalleled in the history of Israel, had "digged down the altars of the true God" and set up the idolatrous worship of Baal—Elijah the Tishbite was divinely commissioned to stem the prevailing

tide of corruption. In answer to his prayer, the heavens became as brass, and for more than three years a withering drought prevailed. Ahab and the priests of Baal charged upon Elijah and Elijah's God the dreadful calamities of the times. Elijah challenged them to a fair contest upon the question. The plan was agreed upon. The multitudes of Israel were summoned to the Mount of Carmel to witness the decisive conflict between truth and idolatry. There sat the royal monarch in his robes of state. Around were gathered the eight hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and of the groves. And there, in his rough mountain garb, the commissioned prophet of the Lord, standing up as the fearless advocate of the true religion, proclaimed to the multitudes: "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. . . . I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under. And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken." Here the issue was a plain one. It was the authentication of Baal and his prophets on the one hand, or of Jehovah and his Prophet Elijah on the other hand; but how was it mutually agreed that the matter should be decided? It was by the direct and simple testimony of a *miracle:* "The God that answereth by fire, let him be God." The prophets of Baal proceeded with their offering first. "But there was no voice nor any that answered." No *miracle* testified in their favor. After every precaution had been taken by Elijah to furnish indubitable proof of a *real* miracle, he proceeded with his offering. He called upon his God, saying, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God! The Lord, he is the God!"

Now, we ask, can any thing be more pointed than the truth here set forth, that *miracle*, and *miracle alone*, was recognized as the direct

and infallible authentication of the mission of him in whose behalf it was performed? In his prayer, Elijah asks God for the *miracle* as a divine attestation of the fact, both that Jehovah was "God in Israel," and that the doings and teachings of his prophet were divinely sanctioned. And when the miracle appeared, there was immediate and unqualified acquiescence in its testimony as final and conclusive. There was no holding of it in abeyance till the character of the teachings of Jehovah by his accredited prophet could be scanned. It was enough that an unquestionable miracle had been witnessed. They had heard the divine utterance in that palpable form, and that was the *finale* on the question.

But let us hear the claims which our Saviour founds upon the testimony of his miracles. His language is: "If I had not done among them the *works* which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." "If I do not the *works* of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the *works*." To this direct, miraculous testimony he constantly appeals. "The *works* which the Father hath given me to do bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me." What these works are, he informs us in the answer he sent to John by those disciples whom John had deputed to ask the Saviour, "Art thou he that should come?" "Go," said Jesus, "and show John again those things which ye do hear and see. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."

Thus it appears that our Saviour placed the strongest possible reliance upon the simple, abstract testimony of miracles. Did he wish to impress the people with the divinity of his claims as a Teacher sent from heaven, or to show them their own responsibility for neglecting his precepts, he never paused to argue out the consistency of his doctrines with the principles of natural religion, or with the "supremacy of conscience within them." However weighty corroborative evidence of this kind may be justly estimated, he never deemed it an essential prerequisite to the testimony of miracles; but ever "taught as one having authority," founding his claims to that authority on the witness of his miracles alone. Had it been otherwise—had it been necessary for the people first to examine all his teachings to see if they embodied any thing whatever "obviously inconsistent with morality, or with historical or mathematical truth"—what would have been the condition of the illiterate masses? How poorly qualified were they for such an investigation, and how little inclined to such an exercise!

But relying, as he did, solely upon his miracles, he could point the blind beggar, the unlettered cottager, the vine-dresser, the shepherd, the publican, the fisherman, the poor, the maimed, the halt, and all the multitudes of common people, to the wonders he performed—to the water blushing to wine, to the man born blind seeing plainly, to the lame man throwing aside his crutches and leaping as the hart, to the howling tempest hushed to silence, and to the dead coming to life at his bidding—and say to all, "Believe me for the *very works'* sake."

Let the proud and insolent cohorts of infidelity come on in bold array, and hurl against God's holy Son their poisoned shafts of deadly hate; let Jew and pagan both unite to snatch from off the head of Zion's King the crown imperial he so justly claimed; let them demand of him where his credentials are, by which to prove his mission is from heaven. He stands erect in presence of opposing foes, and bids the wheels of nature pause; he speaks the word, and all the universe stands ready to attest the claims of his Messiahship. Does infidelity demand his credentials, he brings not his demonstrations nor his logic from the Academy, the Lyceum, or the Portico, but all the hidden forces of omnipotence that slumber concealed in the deep recesses of the material universe instantly become vocal in attestation of his divinity. At his bidding, the liquid element becomes a pavement of adamant beneath his tread, and the finny tenant of the deep becomes his tax-payer. With the same power that once said, "Let there be light," he speaks the word, and visual luster flashes from the sightless ball. The signature of his mission is engraven, not with pen upon parchment, nor with chisel upon marble, but with the finger of Omnipotence upon the dome of nature. He whose behest all natures and all beings obeyed, fixed upon the throne of his own unoriginated divinity, could exclaim in majestic triumph: "The works that I do, they bear witness of me."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XI.

QUESTION 1. In reference to the connection between the truth of a miracle and the truth of the system in behalf of which it has been performed, what three distinct theories have been advocated?

2. Who was a prominent patron of the third theory?

3 What is the objectionable part of his statement?

4 Wherein does his view differ from the second theory?

5. How may its absurdity be shown?

6. How may its inconsistency with Scripture be shown?

7. Explain the first or true theory.

8. What Scripture testimony has been appealed to by those who depreciate the evidence of miracles?

9. How may those objections be set aside?

10 How may it be shown that the first theory is confirmed by the general testimony of the Bible?

CHAPTER XII.

MIRACLES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

HAVING proved, in our preceding chapters, the genuineness and authenticity of the Scriptures, it necessarily follows that the accounts of the miracles therein recorded must be received as a faithful history of facts as they transpired; and having farther shown that miracles are susceptible of satisfactory proof from human testimony, and that, when thus proved, they are direct and conclusive evidence of the divine mission of him who performs them, and of the truth of the doctrines for the confirmation of which they are wrought, it yet remains (to render the argument from this source complete) that we examine the miracles of Scripture to see if they sustain the character of *real, unquestionable miracles,* and if the *testimony* by which the actual performance of them is proved is satisfactory and conclusive.

The two points, then, to be specially noted, in regard to what we deem miraculous in Scripture, are, the *character* of the works themselves, and the *evidence* by which their actual occurrence is established. If it appear that those things in Scripture termed miraculous are not real and genuine miracles, but merely extraordinary and marvelous events which might have been produced by mere natural causes, without any immediate divine interposition, or that there is a radical defect in the evidence sustaining the facts themselves, in either case the Christian argument founded on miracles cannot be reliable and satisfactory; but, on the other hand, should it be manifest that the events in question are real and indisputable miracles, and that the evidence confirming them is clear, ample, and conclusive, then it follows that our argument from miracles rests on a firm and sure basis.

We call attention, first, to the miracles of the Old Testament. It is only important that we advert to some of the more conspicuous of these, nor will it be requisite to go into any minute investigation of them. We think that the real miraculous character of these events, and the fullness and irresistibility of the testimony in favor of their truth, stand forth so palpably upon the face of the record, that it is

scarcely possible for an unprejudiced mind to admit the history and dispute the miracle.

Let us glance, then, in the first place, at the "ten plagues" brought upon Egypt by the hand of Moses. At the bidding of Jehovah, Aaron, under the direction of Moses, stretched forth the consecrated rod upon the waters of Egypt—upon the streams, the rivers, the ponds, and pools of water, throughout all the land—and instantly they crimsoned into blood. Again the rod was stretched forth, and the whole land was covered with frogs—they teemed in the rivers, crowded into the houses, clambered upon the beds, and even the kneading-troughs and ovens were polluted by their presence. Again the rod was stretched out, and the very dust of the earth was transformed into "lice," and both man and beast throughout all the land were tormented with this hateful vermin. Again, the land was cursed with the swarms of flies or hornets—they crowded upon Pharaoh, and upon his servants, and upon all the Egyptians, filling their houses, and covering the very earth. Again, the murrain is sent upon the cattle, upon the oxen, upon the horses, upon the asses, and upon the sheep of the Egyptians, smiting them with death, on a specific day and hour. Again, at the sprinkling of the ashes of the furnace toward heaven by the hand of Moses, in the sight of Pharaoh, they became small dust, settling everywhere upon man and beast among the Egyptians, and breaking forth into boils and blains. Again Moses, at the command of God, stretched forth the rod, and a storm of mingled hail and fire ran along the ground, rending the trees, smiting the herbs, and spreading destruction to both man and beast that were found in the field among the Egyptians. And next came the plague of locusts, darkening the land, destroying the fruit, and every herb and green thing left by the hail; then the three days of "darkness that might be felt;" and last of all came the destruction of the first-born of man and beast among the Egyptians, by the destroying angel.

Now, we ask, can there be a doubt that a *real* miracle was manifest in each of these plagues? They came by previous announcement—no visible natural cause, except the stretching forth of the rod, was present in connection with them — they appeared *instantly*, and at a preannounced time—they fell upon all the Egyptians, while every Israelite with all that he possessed was preserved and escaped. These wonders were so palpable, that they could not have escaped the notice of any, or been misunderstood in their character. They were witnessed by the whole nation of Egypt, and by all the people of Israel. The Passover was instituted at the time, to commemorate the deliverance of the Israelites; and it is as clear as any thing can be, that had the Mosaic

account of these things not been true, the Israelites never could have been induced to accredit the Mosaic record as a revelation from Heaven. Two nations—the Egyptians and the Israelites—were witnesses of all these mighty wonders. Had the record of facts, as given by Moses, not been true, these whole nations of Egyptians and Israelites must have known that the account given by Moses was a cheat, and their testimony would have been recorded against it; but the books of Moses were received from the very first as a revelation from God, by that very people who must have known whether these things which they recorded were true or false. Hence we conclude that the Mosaic miracles were *real;* and they fully establish the divine legation of Moses, and the truth of his writings.

Again, look at the dividing of the Red Sea at the stretching forth of the rod of Moses, and the water standing like walls on each side while the Israelites passed over, and again flowing together just in time to overwhelm with death the pursuing hosts of Pharaoh! See the wonderful interpositions of God in behalf of his people in the wilderness—the miraculous supply of manna, falling in sufficient quantity for use on each day of the week, except the Sabbath, and a double portion on Friday for the supply of that day and the Sabbath also, and then the ceasing of the manna the day when it was no longer needed, and the fact that it was never known before or since! Look at the flinty rock smitten by the rod of Moses, sending forth an abundant stream of water in the face of all Israel! See the brazen-serpent elevated upon the pole, in view of all the tents of the multitude, and each one that had been bitten by the fiery-flying serpent, upon looking upon the serpent of brass, instantly healed of the poison! See the dividing of the waters of the Jordan, and all the people passing over on dry ground! Look at all these things, and say, Were they not *real* miracles? They occurred in the face of the whole nation—they were events that admitted of no deception with those who witnessed them, nor could the lapse of a few years render the remembrance of them indistinct. Now, we ask, could the Jewish people have been made to believe these things, either in that or any succeeding age, had they not been *true?* and, *not* believing them, could they have been induced to receive, as a revelation from Heaven, the books containing what they knew to be a tissue of palpable falsehoods? The events to which we have referred were evidently *real* miracles. No power but that which can control all nature, and suspend or supersede its laws at pleasure, can cover a whole country for three days together with the thickest darkness, and, at the same time, favor all of a specified class in the same region with

"light in their dwellings." Nor could a whole people who had witnessed such an event be misled as to the facts. Equally impossible it would be to persuade them that they *had* witnessed them when they *had not*, or that they *had not* witnessed them when they *had*. These miracles are all palpable and unmistakable in their character: they clearly and satisfactorily prove the truth of that which they were performed to establish; and such is the character of the testimony by which they have been confirmed, that we can only reject it by surrendering ourselves to the reign of almost universal skepticism. If we reject the accounts of the Mosaic miracles, we must, to be consistent with ourselves, reject all authentic history.

As to the grand design or object of these miracles in Egypt, it seems to have been threefold: *first*, to condemn the idolatrous worship of Egypt; *secondly*, to impart to the Egyptians a knowledge of the true God; *thirdly*, to show that Moses was acting under a divine commission.

How, then, do we find these plagues to pour contempt upon the principal objects of Egyptian adoration! The Nile was the most popular divinity of the Egyptians, and, as if to present a striking contrast between its imbecility and the mighty power of Jehovah, the first judgment is poured upon its sacred waters. The frog was one of their sacred animals, and it too, under the divine edict, was turned against them, and made an instrument of their punishment. In the plague of "flies" we see another manifestation of the contempt here poured upon the system of Egyptian idolatry. This insect was also an object of Egyptian idolatrous worship, and the popular idol, Baal-zebub, was styled "lord of the gad-fly." The murrain upon the cattle was also well calculated to teach them how insignificant was their god Apis (the ox) in the hands of Jehovah. In the terrible plague of "hail and fire," the principal divinities of the Egyptians—water, air, and fire—in the hand of Jehovah, are made to combine their influence to terrify and punish those who so stupidly worshiped and trusted in them for protection. In the plague of "darkness," the Egyptians were taught that another of their chief divinities—the sun—could render them no assistance or comfort when Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, saw proper to shroud his beams in a mantle of darkness. These miracles were all performed through the instrumentality of Moses, but by the avowed authority of Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews. Hence we may see how admirably they were adapted to their intended purpose—to consign to contempt the Egyptian idolatry, to promote the knowledge of the true God, and to furnish the divine credentials of Moses.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XII.

QUESTION 1. What are the two points to be specially noted in regard to the miracles of Scripture?

2. What miracles of the Old Testament are first noticed?

3 How does it appear that these plagues were *real* miracles?

4. What two facts are thereby established?

5. What was the grand design of the Egyptian miracles?

6. In what way was this design accomplished?

CHAPTER XIII.

MIRACLES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

We now proceed to notice the miracles of the *New Testament.* It has already been stated, in another connection, that our Saviour ever appealed with the utmost confidence to the works he performed as bearing witness to the divinity of his mission. At present we propose only a brief reference to a few of the most remarkable of those works, to show that they were truly *miraculous* in their character, and were *sufficiently* attested by satisfactory evidence.

We consider it unnecessary either to cite a great number of our Saviour's miracles, or to be very minute in their examination. What, we inquire, are some of the principal of his marvelous works? He changed the water to wine—he healed a man sick of the palsy by simply uttering the words, "Thy sins be forgiven thee"—he opened the eyes of a man "blind from his birth" by anointing them with clay, and directing him "to wash in the pool of Siloam"—he calmed the raging of the tempest by saying, "Peace, be still!"—twice he fed thousands with a few loaves and fishes, and in three several instances he raised the dead to life. When called on by Jairus, a Jewish ruler, in reference to his daughter who was dead, he raised her to life by taking her by the hand and saying, "Damsel, arise?" Passing—in company with his disciples and a multitude of people—into the city of Nain, he met a funeral-procession bearing a dead young man, the son of a widow, to his grave. "He touched the bier, and they that bare him stood still; and he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise; and he that was dead sat up, and began to speak." But the raising of Lazarus to life again, is the most remarkable miracle of this kind performed by our Saviour. Here was a man who had been dead for four days: surrounded by multitudes of people who were present, Jesus—having ordered the stone to be rolled away from the door of the sepulcher—spoke the word, saying, "Lazarus, come forth!" and the dead man instantly arose to life.

Now, we think it cannot be disputed that these works are truly mirac

ulous. They involved, at a single word, the instantaneous change of one material substance to another — the water to wine. They embraced the healing of the most inveterate diseases, and even the cure of blindness from the birth, without the employment of any adequate natural agencies. Many of them were performed in the presence of great multitudes of persons: all classes, friends and foes, disciples and persecutors, witnessed them; and they were of the most obvious and palpable character. They were open to the inspection of the external senses of all; and such were their nature, and the circumstances attending them, that imposition or collusion was impossible. The cures, though instantaneous in the production and with no adequate natural agency for their cause, were permanent in their duration, presenting favorable opportunity for numerous and deliberate inspections. Hence, if they had not been *real* miracles, there was every opportunity for the detection and exposure of the cheat; and, surrounded as the Saviour was by the wily Sadducees and Pharisees, and by the adroit scribes and doctors of the law, who were ever on the alert to entangle him in his words and to bring his doctrines into disrepute, we may be well assured that, had it been possible, he would have been convicted of deception. But the *fact* of his miracles—in the day and among the community in which they were performed—was never disputed. The *facts* were admitted, but they were attributed to infernal agency. Hence we infer that the mighty works of the Saviour were *real* miracles, and that they indubitably attest the claims of his Messiahship, and the truth of his religion.

In conclusion, on the subject of miracles, we call attention to the *resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*, the greatest of all the Scripture miracles.

That there lived in the land of Judea, in the days of Augustus and Tiberius Cesar, a remarkable person called Jesus of Nazareth; that he taught a pure and sublime system of morality, and led an exemplary and self-denying life; that he was a devoted friend to the poor and the afflicted, and performed many astonishing miracles; that he was persecuted by the Jews, and accused of blasphemy and sedition; that he was condemned by the Roman governor, and crucified at Jerusalem; that his body was taken down from the cross, interred in Joseph's tomb, and a band of Roman soldiers set to guard it till the third day should be passed—*these* are facts which Christianity has always asserted, and which infidelity, neither in that age nor for centuries afterward, ever denied. Celsus, of the second century, Porphyry, of the third century and Hierocles and Julian the Apostate, of the fourth century, never

dared to dispute them; but they attributed the miracles of Jesus either to magic or infernal agency.

But did Jesus Christ rise again from the dead? or did he not? Here Christianity and infidelity join issue. Christianity affirms—infidelity denies. That the whole controversy turns upon this question cannot be denied. If Jesus Christ arose from the dead, then is he the Messiah—the Saviour of the world—and his religion is *true;* but if he did not arise from the dead, then he is an impostor, his gospel a delusion, and the hope of his followers a dream! Upon this point the inspired apostles rested their cause, when they first issued the proclamation of salvation in the name of Him who had been crucified. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead was a prominent point in that sermon of St. Peter at Pentecost, delivered in Jerusalem only a few weeks after his crucifixion, when three thousand were converted in a day. Indeed, the burden of apostolic preaching was "Jesus and the resurrection."

If, then, the great Christian controversy—whether with Jews, pagans, or whatever class of unbelievers—turns upon the question of *fact* as to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, how important that the evidences bearing upon *that fact* be carefully examined and correctly understood! Contemplating, then, the resurrection of Christ in the light of an *historic fact*, we propose to examine it by the same laws of evidence by which any other *fact* of history should be judged. If *this fact* can be sustained by such evidence as would be satisfactory and convincing to a rational mind in regard to any other fact of history, then must we either admit that this fact is *true*, and that Christianity also is *true*, or renounce our reason itself. On the other hand, if this fact *cannot* be thus sustained, then "is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." Let us therefore look at the testimony.

We must begin by assuming *as true* what is admitted on both sides—that is, the *general facts* above stated, concerning the life, crucifixion, and burial of Jesus. The only point in controversy is the simple question of fact: *Did* Jesus rise again from the dead? or *did he not?* If, as admitted on both sides, he was crucified, and his dead body buried and guarded as we have stated, then it is undeniable that, after the third day, his enemies, if he had not arisen from the dead, would have been able to produce that dead body, or to furnish some satisfactory account for their inability to produce it. *Did they do either?* For eighteen centuries infidelity has denied that Jesus arose from the dead, and yet infidels have never pretended to produce the dead body of him who was crucified between the two thieves! This fact *alone* stands forth as a presumptive argument, of almost irresistible power, in favor

of the resurrection of Jesus. Did not his enemies *know* that the whole controversy, as to his character and the truth of his religion, depended upon the fact of his *rising* or *not rising* again on the third day? Did they not *know* that he had foretold that he would thus rise? Was it not to prevent imposition on the part of his disciples in regard to this very thing that a guard of sixty armed soldiers was placed around his dead body? Were they not bound to produce his dead body after the third day, both to justify themselves in putting him to death and to save the world from the delusions of imposture! Would they not have produced that body, had it been in their power to do so? Can a reasonable mind doubt that, if it had been in their power, his enemies would have produced that dead body, after the third day, most promptly and triumphantly? *Did they do it?* Did they *pretend* or *attempt to do it?* And if they did nothing of the kind, what is the rational inference but that *they did not, because they could not?* And if they *could not,* unless he has arisen from the dead, they *can* furnish—they are *bound* to furnish—a reasonable and satisfactory account for that inability. *Have* they furnished this account? Can a reasonable mind *doubt* that they would have furnished the world with *the most satisfactory account* for their inability to produce the dead body of Jesus after the third day, had it been in their power?

But let us look at the only apology an infidel world has ever presented for this inability to produce the dead body of Jesus. It is *this:* "His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept." These are the words put into the mouth of the guard, and currently reported in that day among the Jews. Irrational and absurd as we may be led to consider this story, yet, as it is the only attempt the opponents of Christianity have ever made to account for the absence of the dead body of Jesus, after the third day, it demands a serious consideration. We think it will appear that this story bears upon its face such an array of improbability, that no rational mind *can believe it to be true.* Allow us briefly to enumerate some of the most obvious of these improbabilities:

1. Is it reasonable to believe that the disciples would have attempted such a theft under the circumstances? Twelve obscure peasants—without learning—without power, title, or influence—alarmed, discouraged, and scattered like sheep without a shepherd, when their Master was arrested—would they rally and risk their lives in so hopeless a task as to go, unarmed as they were, to wrest the dead body of Jesus from the custody of sixty armed soldiers?

2. But granting—what is exceedingly improbable—that they might

have made the attempt, is it probable they would have found the guard all asleep on their post at the same time? When it is known that it was death by the Roman law for a soldier to sleep at his post, would the whole band have fallen into profound sleep at the same time? Can a reasonable mind believe this to be possible?

3. But, admitting that they had all fallen asleep at the same time, is it reasonable to suppose that they would have selected, as an appropriate time for slumber, the dawn of "the third day"?—the *first hour* of the *very day* on which he had said he would rise! Would they have selected *that* time—when it was all-important for them to be vigilant—as the time for inattention and sleep? *Who can believe it?*

4. But admit *this* to have been the case, improbable as it is, is it to be believed that the disciples could have entered by stealth within the inclosure of this armed guard, broken the seal from the sepulcher, rolled the great stone away from its door, and borne away the dead body to a place of concealment—and all this in so noiseless a manner as not to have awakened one of the guard?

5. But admitting *this* improbability to have taken place also, is it to be presumed that these sixty armed soldiers, finding that their dead prisoner had been taken from them while they were asleep, would have fled immediately to the city and reported themselves guilty of a crime whose penalty was death, without making a single effort to save their own lives by searching for and endeavoring to recover the stolen body?

6. But if the soldiers were all "asleep," how could *they know* that *the disciples stole the body?* Some *other persons* may have done it, or he may have *arisen from the dead*, for aught *they* could know, if they were all "asleep"!

7. But admitting, for the sake of argument, all these improbabilities to have occurred (which no sane person *can* believe), is it probable that a Roman guard, commissioned with so important a trust, would have been permitted all to sleep at their post, and thus allow their dead charge to escape from their custody, and no arrest or trial of these soldiers be attempted, or the least inquiry made concerning so gross a neglect of so important a duty?

8. But, admitting *all this* to have occurred, who *can* believe, even if the soldiers had been allowed to escape, that the enemies of Christ would have treated these *disciples* with such lenity? Had it been believed by the Jews and the Romans, the chief priests and the elders—the enemies of Jesus—that "the disciples had stolen the body of Jesus," would not these disciples have been arrested and tried, and made to confront these dignitaries of the law and their sleeping witnesses, and compelled to

deliver up the stolen body or to suffer for their crime? But we hear *not one word of all this*—nothing of the arrest of the soldiers or of the disciples—no searching for the escaped corpse—no arraignment of the guilty parties through whose *neglect* or *theft* it had been abstracted! He who can believe *any one of these improbabilities to have occurred*, without evidence—yea, contrary to all reason and all testimony—is poorly fitted to charge the Christian with credulity; and yet, absurd as they all appear, we are compelled to subscribe to *every one of them* if we deny that Jesus *rose from the dead!* Is it possible, we ask, that one intelligent man of all these soldiers, chief priests, and elders, could have believed that the disciples stole the dead body of Jesus? The position is too unreasonable and absurd. They did not believe it themselves — they *knew* better!

Had they believed this story, how can we account for the fact that they never argued it afterward, when it would have been so natural for them to have done so, and when it would so admirably have suited their purpose? Indeed, the absurd story put into the mouth of the guard was conjured up amid so much hurry, confusion, and trepidation, that it did not exhibit the usual sagacity of its authors. They seem ever after to have been ashamed of it themselves. Ready enough are these Jewish rulers and members of the Sanhedrim to persecute and arraign the apostles for preaching that Jesus was arisen from the dead; but why did they never charge home upon them the theft they had committed? Only a few days after these events occurred, first Peter and John, and next the whole college of the apostles, are arrested and brought before the Sanhedrim! Here the apostles, in the very face of the great council and of the inventors of the story of the stealing of the body, boldly assert the resurrection of Jesus, and affirm that they have seen, felt, and conversed with him, after his resurrection. How passing strange, that in no one of these instances was the crime of having stolen the dead body of Jesus brought against the apostles! Why were they not formally accused of this theft? Why were not Joseph of Arimathea and the whole Roman guard instantly summoned and made to confront them? The great question is, the resurrection of Jesus, which the apostles affirm; but not one of the guard is called to confront them. The stealing of the body is not named! And why? Because the Sanhedrim *did not believe the story!*

Having considered—and, as we humbly conceive, demonstrated—the unreasonable and unsatisfactory character of the only plea an infidel world has ever presented to account for the inability of the enemies of Jesus to produce his dead body, after the third day, we now call

attention to the *positive* testimony in favor of the resurrection of Christ.

Look at the *number* of the witnesses. It is written: "At the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established." This was not only a maxim in the Jewish law, but it has been incorporated in the codes and recognized in the judicial proceedings of all civilized lands. "*Two or three witnesses*" of good understanding and character, unimpeached and uncontradicted in their testimony, will establish any legally-contested fact before any enlightened civil tribunal under heaven! In the light of this maxim, examine the witnesses in favor of the resurrection of Christ.

1. The guard of *sixty soldiers* fled to the city, and told the chief priests the whole story of the resurrection of Jesus, and never disguised the *fact* till bribed by large sums of money to give currency to the absurd story which we have considered. Let their testimony therefore, free from bribery and corruption, be recorded in favor of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

2. Early on the third morning, as we learn by collating the accounts of the several evangelists, a company of women (as many as *five or more*), coming to the sepulcher with spices and incense, ointment and perfumes, for the purpose of embalming the dead body, met their risen Lord, conversed with him, and, going immediately to the city, were the first among his friends to depose their testimony that he had risen from the dead.

3. On the same day, two disciples (*not of the twelve*, as it appears), as journeying to the village of Emmaus, met the risen Jesus on the way, who was "known of them in breaking of bread." Returning to Jerusalem the next morning, they manfully testified that "the Lord was risen indeed."

4. For the space of forty days after his resurrection, Jesus appeared on various occasions to the eleven apostles, giving "many infallible proofs" that he "was alive after his passion," and speaking to them "of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

5. St. Paul, in summing up to the Corinthians the witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus, adds to those already enumerated as many as "five hundred brethren," of whom he was "seen at once;" and "last of all," he says, "he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." Now, add together all these witnesses — the sixty soldiers, the five women, the two travelers to Emmaus, the eleven apostles, and St. Paul himself — and you have the number of at least five hundred and seventy-nine persons who saw the risen Jesus, and bore their testi

mony to the *fact* in question. Surely, there is no paucity as to the number of witnesses!

We now look at the *character* of these witnesses, and the *facts connected with their testimony.*

Who were these apostles? Though not men of learning or position —though taken from the humble walks of life—yet they were all, so far as we can judge, men of strong common sense and unimpeached integrity. Their history and their writings are ample proof of this. And this much being conceded, we think it will also be admitted that if Jesus Christ *did not* rise from the dead, then the apostles were either *deceived themselves* in asserting that he had arisen, believing the assertion to be *true* when it *was not*, or they *knowingly deceived others*, asserting for *truth* what they knew to be *falsehood.* If neither of these positions can be accredited, then it irresistibly follows that Jesus Christ did arise from the dead. But, we ask, is it possible that the apostles and all their co-witnesses could have been deceived in this matter? If they had stolen the body of Jesus and burnt it to ashes, or hidden it away, *did they not know the fact?* Had they not been familiarly acquainted with their Master for years, and did they not affirm that they had been with him again and again after his resurrection, under a variety of circumstances, for "forty days"? Could they have been deceived as to his identity? Admitting that one or two might have been deluded on one or two occasions, could so many have been deluded on so many occasions? Slow of heart to believe as they were, they could not have been deceived in this matter! If Jesus had not arisen, his dead body was somewhere—either his friends or his enemies had made away with it, or they yet had it in keeping. His enemies *had not*, or they would have produced it, or accounted for its absence; and if his friends had his body, or had disposed of it, they knew he had not risen from the dead. Hence it seems impossible that the apostles could have been deceived themselves in this matter. If Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead, *they knew it.*

But, *lastly*, can we suppose that the apostles willfully and knowingly imposed upon the world, by preaching the resurrection of Christ, when they knew the doctrine to be false? If he had not arisen from the dead, they knew him to be an impostor: he had deceived them, and *they knew it.* Will rational men still cleave to an impostor, knowing him to be such, and sacrifice their lives to sustain the posthumous honor of one who has done them the deepest injury!

But we ask, where, among all the considerations that can influence the rational mind, can we find the motive that could have induced the apostles to proclaim, as they did, the resurrection of Jesus, knowing it

to be false? Was it for the sake of popularity, or ease, or pleasure, or riches? What prospect had they of any of these? Toil and reproach, persecution and tribulation, bonds and imprisonment, suffering and death, were all they received, and all for which they could hope on earth! Is this the reward that can stimulate the rational mind voluntarily to persist in asserting a known pernicious falsehood? No! The apostles were honest and sincere men. They proclaimed what they believed—they testified what they had seen! They *knew* their Master had arisen from the dead! Without titles, without wealth, without emolument, they challenged both Jews and Gentiles to the conflict, preached Jesus and the resurrection in the face of an opposing world, healed the sick and raised the dead in the name of the risen One, and sealed the truth of their doctrine by the sacrifice of their lives.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XIII.

QUESTION 1. What are some of the principal of our Saviour's miraculous works?

2. How may it be shown that they were *real* miracles, and were actually performed?

3. What is considered the greatest of the Saviour's miracles?

4. What facts connected with it were admitted by unbelievers?

5 How should this question of fact be examined?

6 How did the Jews account for the absence of the dead body of Christ?

7. What considerations are specified showing the absurdity of this account?

8. Has infidelity ever accounted for the absence of Christ's dead body in any other way?

9. What witnesses are enumerated as testifying to the resurrection of Christ?

10. What are the circumstances named rendering their testimony so satisfactory and conclusive?

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PROPHECIES OF SCRIPTURE IN RELATION TO THE JEWS.

THE second great division of the *external evidences* of Christianity is that founded on PROPHECY. To this we now call attention. *Prophecy*, taken in connection with its fulfillment, is no less *miraculous* than are *miracles* technically so called. Miracles *proper* are miracles of *power;* but prophecies are miracles of *knowledge.* As the one implies an exercise of divine *power*, suspending or controlling the laws of nature beyond the ability of uncreated beings to exert, so the other implies an exhibition of divine *knowledge*, penetrating the distant future, and predicting events yet to come in a manner surpassing the skill of all created intelligences. The one can only be performed by Omnipotence; the other, by Omniscience. Hence, as these attributes belong to God alone, it necessarily follows that whatever is performed or sanctioned by them is stamped with the divine signature, and must be *true.* We, therefore, adopt the principle, that *real* miracle and *real* prophecy are both absolute and indubitable evidence of the truth of that which they are used to confirm.

That this kind of testimony is of the highest possible order, and should command our immediate and most unreserved confidence, results from the very constitution of our nature. Common sense teaches us to accredit the testimony of our own external senses when satisfied that they are under no deceptive illusion, and also to rely implicitly upon the evidence of our own experience when fully assured that there can be no mistake as to its teachings. And the knowledge we derive from these sources is as deeply stamped with *certainty* as any other kind of knowledge we can possibly acquire. Indeed, we cannot travel behind the record here furnished us either for the correction of the lessons of our own senses or personal experience, or with the hope of finding any thing more certain on which to rely. Common sense teaches us that if we are not certain that the lessons here taught us are true, we can be certain of nothing. It is not by argumentative disquisition that we become satisfied that none but God can perform a miracle either of

power or of knowledge, but we are taught this lesson by the dictates of common sense itself. Our knowledge derived from this source can neither be rendered *more* nor *less* certain by discussion. In this department, the plain, unlettered peasant is on a level with the erudite philosopher. The one, independent of all investigation, is just as well satisfied as the other *can* be, that God only, and he to whom he imparts the power, can perform miracles. And as prophecy is nothing but a *miracle of knowledge*, every man knows by the simple exercise of his common sense that *real* prophecy must flow from the divine omniscience. Hence it is a sure testimony of the divine legation of him who utters it.

In judging concerning the testimony of professed prophecy, there are two points to be particularly examined: First, the *character* of the prediction; secondly, the *fact* of the fulfillment. If the pretended prediction be a *real* prophecy—that is, a preännouncement of a future event, either so distant or so improbable or complicated as obviously to be beyond the power of finite minds, by any exercise of skill or sagacity, to be able to acquire a knowledge of the things it announces—and if it be ascertained that the facts correspond fully with the prediction, then we may conclude that we have in the case the elements of *real* prophecy. But, on the other hand, should it appear that the pretended prediction is only what might have been foreseen by human sagacity as likely to occur, or what might be no more than a shrewd or fortunate guess—or if it be found that the facts in the case do not show the fulfillment of the pretended prediction, in either event—we fail to find the elements of a *real* prophecy.

To decide the question whether a given prophecy be *real* or *surreptitious*, we know of no safer or more reliable principle by which to be governed than the dictates of *common sense*. When possessed of the necessary information as to the facts in the case, the judgment of any impartial man of common sense will enable him with little difficulty to distinguish between a real and a spurious prophecy.

There are a few very simple rules which every reflecting mind will be led to observe in judging the force of prophetic testimony. *First*, testimony of this kind increases generally in convincing power in proportion as the fulfillment is *remote in the future* from the announcement of the prophecy; *secondly*, it also increases in proportion as the specifications in the prediction are *increased in number; thirdly*, this testimony increases in force in proportion as the events predicted are in themselves *improbable*.

To examine the predictions of Scripture generally, would require

volumes, instead of a brief, concise treatise. All we propose is, a presentation of a few of the more conspicuous and important from both the Old and the New Testaments. We begin with the Old Testament:

I. Prophecies relating to the Jewish nation.

We will first present some of the Scriptures, predicting calamities that were to befall the Jews:

"When ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you, and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight; and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied. . . . And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters. . . . And I will bring the land into desolation, and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen; . . . and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. . . . And ye shall perish among the heathen. . . . And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands. . . . When they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly." Lev. xxvi.

"Thou shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. . . . Thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore. . . . Thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee. . . . The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. . . He shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail. . . . The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favor to the young. . . . And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down. . . . And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee. . . The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil . . . toward her children which she shall bear; for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates. . . . And ye shall be left few in number. . . . And ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth

even unto the other. . . . And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest. . . . And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships; . . . and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you." Deut. xxviii.

In these prophecies there are no less than eighteen distinct, minute, and striking specifications. They descend, in description, to small and circumstantial incidents, and embrace items totally distinct from each other, having no mutual connection or dependence; such, for instance, as these: The language of their conquerors was "not to be understood" by the Jews; they were to be taken captive "to Egypt in ships;" women were to "eat the flesh of their offspring," etc. Nor was the language dark and obscure, or shrouded in mysterious emblem. It was mostly simple narrative, recording events of an obvious and striking nature. The besieging of cities, the slaughter of vast multitudes, the dispersion of the nation, etc.; concerning such facts as these, there could be no misapprehension. They were obvious to the senses of all.

Observe the time and circumstances under which these predictions were uttered. The Israelites were yet amid their wilderness journeyings, they were yet strangers and pilgrims, they had not yet crossed the Jordan, or reached the promised land. The Canaanites were yet to be rooted out, the land distributed among the tribes, and the people organized and established as a nation. In this unsettled and precarious state of affairs, how could Moses, unless inspired from above, certainly and minutely foretell the fortunes of this people for centuries to come? And yet it has been demonstrated that all these wonderful prophecies had been delivered by Moses in the hearing of all Israel, and recorded in the book of the law to be laid up "by the side of the ark," while as yet this people had but an embryo nationality.

But let us more particularly glance at some of these plain predictions, and their striking fulfillment.

Unless divinely inspired, how could Moses so graphically preännounce the "famine and pestilence" that were to come upon this people? And yet how literally was it fulfilled! If it be supposed that he might merely have conjectured the facts, and that the fulfillment was *accidental*, we demand, How could he have foreseen the peculiar *extremities* in the case? In the siege of Samaria, "an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver." In the siege of Jerusalem, by Nebuchadnezzar, "the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land." And who can read Josephus and not be overwhelmed

with the view of the sufferings of the people from the raging famine during the siege by the Romans? But it was foretold that they should "eat the flesh of their sons and their daughters," and that even "tender and delicate women" should eat the flesh of their own children. At three different times, according to authentic history, was this remarkable prediction fulfilled. Once at the siege of Samaria by the Syrians, six hundred years after the announcement of the prophecy, when "two women gave up their children to be eaten." 2 Kings vi. 28, 29. Again it was fulfilled, nine hundred years after the prediction, in the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, when it was declared, "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children." Lam. iv. 10. Again, after the lapse of fifteen hundred years from the prediction, it was verified in the dreadful siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, when a noble woman, pressed to madness by the famine, killed and ate her own sucking child. (Josephus.)

How could mere human sagacity foresee that the Jews would become a numerous and prosperous people, and yet their land be reduced to "desolation;" and the people be "minished," and become "few in number." And yet it is declared: "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! . . . Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude; she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest." Lam. i. 1, 3. Josephus testifies that there fell, during the siege, by the hands of the Romans, and by their own faction, one million one hundred thousand Jews; and *ninety-seven thousand* Jews were carried into captivity by the Romans.

Moses had foretold, many centuries before, that the Lord would "root them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation" (Deut. xxix. 28); and Josephus and the Roman historians have recorded the fulfillment.

But the Jews were to be borne "in ships," and sold into Egypt as slaves till the market should be so glutted that "no man would buy them." Josephus testifies that the captives taken by the Romans, "who were above seventeen years of age," were sent to Egypt; and it cannot well be doubted that, as they were "in bonds," they were conveyed "in ships"—for the Romans then had a fleet in the Mediterranean. And it is said, the market was so overstocked that they were sold for the merest trifle—so that the words of Moses were verified "No man shall buy you."

But it was farther predicted that the Jews should be dispersed among all nations—"plucked from off" their own land, and "scattered among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other." Look at

the fulfillment. First, the ten tribes are carried captive by the Assyrians; next, the two other tribes by Nebuchadnezzar; finally, the Romans completed the dispersion by taking away "their place and nation."

For a long time after this, the poor "wandering Jews" were not allowed to set foot in Jerusalem, and at one time they were forbidden to press with their feet the soil of Palestine. Still they survive—not "destroyed utterly," but exiles from their own land, and disconsolate "strangers and sojourners" in all lands. "What a marvelous thing is this," says Bishop Newton, "that after so many wars, battles, and sieges—after so many rebellions, massacres, and persecutions—after so many years of captivity, slavery, and misery—they are not destroyed utterly; and, though scattered among all people, yet subsist a distinct people by themselves. Where is any thing like this to be found in all the histories and in all the nations under the sun?"

They were to be restless—finding no ease; neither were "the soles of their feet" to "have rest." And to what land or clime have they not wandered or been driven? They have trodden the burning deserts of the South, and waded the drifting snows of the North, but a permanent resting-place they have found nowhere.

Again, how could Moses know centuries beforehand that the nation by whom they should be conquered, and subjugated, and dispersed from their own land, throughout all the earth, should come "from far, from the end of the earth, swift as the *eagle* flieth, whose tongue" they should "not understand," and should be "a nation of fierce countenance"? The *remoteness* of the Romans from the land of Judea, the *warlike* character of their nation, the *rapidity* of their conquests, the fact that their military ensign was the "*eagle*," and that the Jews knew nothing of their "*language*;" these notorious facts most exactly and specifically verify the fulfillment of the prophecy.

Once more, they were to become "an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations." How literally has this been fulfilled! Pagans, Mohammedans, and Christians, however much they may differ from each other, have all agreed in meting out to that people, who had "despised and rejected" the Holy One, the same kind of treatment which the wicked Jews had awarded to their Messiah. In all lands, this cast-off and down-trodden people have been despised, persecuted, and abused. In all the ages of their banishment, and in all countries, they have ever been under the ban—like the unclean spirit, "seeking rest, and finding none." If in a few places temporary respite has been allowed them, this has been the exception; the general conduct of the

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nations of the earth toward the Jews has been a virtual fulfillment of the prophetic imprecation of that deluded people, who, eighteen centuries ago, exclaimed: "His blood be upon us and upon our children!" Yet for all this, like "the burning bush" seen by Moses, they are "not consumed." The hand of God is still over them; and, though dispersed among all nations, they are kept from being identified with or absorbed by any. They have everywhere remained a distinct and peculiar people, awaiting the fulfillment of another prophecy by their conversion and restoration. "What nation hath subsisted," says Bishop Newton, "as a distinct people in their own country so long as these have done in their dispersion into all countries? And what a standing miracle is this exhibited to the view and observation of the whole world! Here are instances of prophecies delivered above three thousand years ago, and yet, as we see, fulfilling in the world at this very time; and what stronger proof can we desire of the divine legation of Moses? How these instances may affect others, I know not; but, for myself, I must acknowledge they not only convince but amaze and astonish me beyond expression." Could human sagacity have uttered these prophecies? If not, then were they given by inspiration of Heaven; and if so, as Keith has observed, then "the Bible *is* true—infidelity is confounded forever, and we may address its patrons in the language of St. Paul: 'Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish!'"

Before we close our notice of the fulfillment of prophecy in relation to the Jews, we call attention to that remarkable prediction concerning their restoration from the Babylonian captivity, effected through the instrumentality of Cyrus, the Persian king.

In the forty-fourth and forty-fifth chapters of Isaiah, that prophet utters on this subject the following prediction:

"Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, . . . that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof; that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right-hand I have holden to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut. . . . I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places."

The first thing to be noted in relation to this astonishing prediction

is, that it was uttered by Isaiah, according to all chronology, more than a century before Cyrus was born, and more than two centuries before its fulfillment in the taking of Babylon.

Josephus records that Cyrus, after he had entered Babylon, was shown a copy of the prophecy of Isaiah, in which the name of the Persian monarch was mentioned as the instrument through whom the Jewish people should be restored to their own land. He adds, also, that this restoration under Cyrus occurred just *seventy years* after the Jews had been carried into captivity; thereby fulfilling the prediction of Jeremiah, uttered before the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, that after they had served the King of Babylon and his posterity *seventy years* they should be restored to the land of their fathers. Josephus also testifies that the prediction of Isaiah concerning Cyrus had been given "one hundred and forty years before the temple was demolished." So that there can be no doubt that this prediction, in which the Persian king is named and his taking of the city of Babylon so graphically described, had been published among the Jews, and that its inspired author was dead long before the event took place. Were there no other specification in the prophecy, but simply the naming of Cyrus as the instrument through whom the Jews should be delivered from their captivity, this would be one of the most remarkable, and, to my mind, one of the most convincing, prophecies of the Bible. But look at the number and striking character of the specifications; and then the wonderful exactitude of the fulfillment.

Cyrus is not only God's "shepherd" and his "anointed" to "perform his pleasure" in the deliverance of his people, but through his instrumentality Jerusalem is to be inhabited, the rivers are to be dried up, the cities to be rebuilt, Jerusalem to be rebuilt, the foundation of the temple to be relaid, the loins of kings to be loosed, the gates of brass opened, the bars of iron broken, and the treasures of darkness given to Cyrus! Here are ten distinct specifications, all plain and obvious to the senses of every beholder, so that misapprehension is an impossibility. But next, behold the fulfillment! Every single specification, according to the most authentic and uncontradicted testimony of all ancient history, is most fully and most clearly fulfilled. Who can doubt that the cities of Judea were rebuilt after the return of the Jews? that Jerusalem, their dilapidated capital, was again reared up? that the Jews returned, and again dwelt in their city? that the channel of the Euphrates was dried up, and its waters turned in another direction? that the temple was again erected under the superintendence of Ezra and Nehemiah? that the gates of brass and the bars of iron, placed at

the passage of the river, gave way for the entrance of Cyrus and his army? that the "loins" of Belshazzar were "loosed," and that his knees were smiting together, and that he was quaking with alarm from the "handwriting upon the wall," at the very moment when Cyrus was entering with his hosts by the "two-leaved gates" that had been left open? and that Cyrus soon possessed himself, amid the darkness of the night, of the immense "treasures" of that wealthy metropolis? Thus all the specifications were met. The prediction and fulfillment embraced each other. The evangelical prophet was seen to be a faithful chronicler of posthumous history. His mission was honored with the seal of Heaven's authority; and an evidence from prophecy in favor of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures was here exhibited for the confirmation of the Church, too overwhelmingly conclusive to be demolished by the assaults of infidelity.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XIV.

QUESTION 1. What is the second grand division of *external* evidence?

2. In what sense is the evidence from prophecy *miraculous?*

3. Is the evidence from prophecy absolutely conclusive?

4. What is the character of the evidence based on our own senses or experience?

5. In judging of the evidence from prophecy, what two points are specially important?

6. What are the *elements* of a real prophecy?

7. What three rules are given for judging of the force of prophetic testimony?

8. What predictions concerning the Jews are given, and can their fulfillment be shown?

9. What was the prediction concerning their restoration from the Babylonian captivity, and how was it fulfilled?

10. What number of specifications are found in the prediction here given?

11. Can it be shown how each was fulfilled?

CHAPTER XV.

PROPHECIES IN RELATION TO NINEVEH, BABYLON, AND TYRE.

BESIDES the prophecies concerning the Jewish nation, some of which we have briefly noticed, the Old Testament records many striking predictions in relation to several of the neighboring nations and cities, which have been fulfilled in a very exact and impressive manner. Our limits will not allow us to enter into a particular discussion of these prophecies, but we would refer those who wish to examine them particularly to the writings of Bishop Newton and the Rev. Alexander Keith.

We will, however, make a few remarks in reference to *Nineveh*, *Babylon*, and *Tyre*.

Nineveh was the ancient capital of Assyria, and was at one time "an exceeding great city, three days' journey" in circuit, and numbering more than six hundred thousand souls (Jonah iii. 3). It was in a prosperous condition up to the period at which it comes under the notice of prophecy. Nahum is the prophet who utters the prediction concerning this city, and Diodorus Siculus is the principal historian who records the fulfillment.

The prophet, while yet the hum of business and the noise of revelry and dissipation were heard in the streets and halls of this wicked and voluptuous metropolis, lifted up his voice and pronounced its coming doom. He declared that, suddenly and unexpectedly, the city should be overtaken with a complete and final overthrow. Amid the drunkenness and debauchery of the king, his courtiers, and his soldiers, they were to be defeated and despoiled of their wealth. With flood and flame, their proud capital was to be *totally* and *irretrievably* ruined. The prophet's words are: "The Lord will make an utter end of the place. Affliction shall not rise up the second time; she is empty, void, and waste: the Lord will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. How is she become a desolation—a place for beasts to lie down in!"

In a little over one century from the announcement of the approach

ing ruin by the inspired prophet, all that he had spoken came to pass —that is, the calamities threatened were realized—the judgment came as it had been foretold. But it had also been foretold that this judgment should never be removed; and there, upon that devoted spot, it rests to this day! In the second century, Lucian searched for the spot where Nineveh once stood, but he found no vestige of it remaining, and declared that "none could tell where it was once situated." And till recently none could point to the ground pressed by the footsteps of Jonah, as he preached repentance to the Ninevites. Let the proud skeptic, before he scoffs at the prophecies of the Bible, account for the standing miracle we here behold! When that rich metropolis of the first great empire of earth was yet standing in all its greatness and glory, who but Omniscience *could* have foreseen that so soon *it* would perish and be blotted out forever? How *true* are the predictions of Heaven! Where God has made a record by the pen of prophecy, neither the mutations of earth nor the ravages of time can efface the changeless impress!

Babylon, the renowned metropolis of Chaldea, figures largely in prophetic scripture. Mr. Richard Watson remarks that "the reasons why prophecies, so numerous and particular, were recorded concerning Babylon, appear to have been: 1. That Babylon was the great oppressor of the Jews. 2. That it was the type of all the powerful persecuting enemies of the Church of God, especially of Rome, and in its fate they may read their own. 3. That the accomplishment of prophecy, in the destruction of so eminent an empire, might give a solemn testimony to the truth of the Scriptures to the whole earth, and to all ages."

To transcribe all the prophetic scriptures relating to Babylon, would require more space than our plan will allow for the whole subject. All we propose is, a glance at the nature of the Christian evidence derived from this source. The most numerous and important predictions under this head are furnished us by the Prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah. The words of the former, so far as the taking of Babylon by Cyrus and the releasing of the Jews from captivity are concerned, have already been noticed.

We now call attention to the predictions concerning the complete destruction of Babylon, and the utter desolation by which the place it once occupied with so much pride and pomp was to be cursed. In the words of Jeremiah, it was foretold, at a time when Babylon was in all its pride and greatness, that Babylon should "be desolate forever. . . . Every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. . . .

Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment and a hissing, without an inhabitant. . . . Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby. . . . The wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein; and it shall be no more inhabited forever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbor cities thereof, saith the Lord, so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein." Jer. l., li.

The Prophet Isaiah speaks as follows: "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces." Isa. xiii.

The fact is unquestionable that these predictions were uttered, and recorded in the sacred writings of the Jews, while Babylon was yet in its greatest strength and prosperity. According to the chronology of Horne, Isaiah commenced his prophetic career more than *eight hundred years* before Christ; Jeremiah more than *six hundred years* before Christ; and Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar and the Jews carried captive *six hundred and six years* before Christ—while Jeremiah was exercising the prophetic office. But the Jews had been *seventy years* in their captivity before they were delivered by Cyrus; hence it is evident that Isaiah must have delivered his predictions concerning the downfall of Babylon at least two centuries before these calamities commenced; and Jeremiah must have delivered his predictions on the subject about a century before the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, for he died, as is supposed, in Egypt, in a year or two after the commencement of the captivity, having exercised his prophetic office more than forty years.

The evidence, then, is complete, that while Babylon was yet the most wealthy and prosperous city the world had ever seen, and all the surrounding country unparalleled in fertility, and while the powerful and haughty monarch, peacefully occupying his throne of grandeur, was boastfully exclaiming, "Is not this great Babylon which *I* have built by the might of *my* power, and for the honor of *my* majesty?"—while

this scene was transpiring in that "wonder of the world," the metropolis of this great empire—it was even *then* recorded upon the prophetic page of Isaiah: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen!"

That the fulfillment of these prophecies is wonderfully exact and striking, cannot be denied. Historians and travelers who have described the fate of Babylon, and portrayed the astounding desolation and ruin which for ages past have reigned throughout all that once prosperous country, have been unable to perform this task in more truthful or graphic language than that furnished by the inspired prophets *three thousand years* ago, when the Euphrates flowed through the most fertile plains upon earth, and that majestic city—the mistress of the nations—sat upon her banks. What philosopher or politician, gazing then upon Babylon—with her sixty miles of circumference, inclosed by a wall eighty-seven feet thick and three hundred and fifty feet high—with her Temple of Belus, the most magnificent structure the world ever saw—with her wonderful hanging-gardens, and her two hundred and fifty imposing towers, some of them looking down upon the city from an altitude of more than six hundred feet, and casting their shade far upon the surrounding plain—what philosopher, politician, or "wise man of the East," under such circumstances, by any human foresight or sagacity, could have predicted the ruin and desolation which have long brooded over that ill-fated region?

In describing the district where Babylon once stood, Mignan says: "Our path lay through the great mass of ruined heaps on the site of 'shrunken Babylon;' and I am perfectly incapable of conveying an adequate idea of the dreary, lonely nakedness that appeared before us." Porter testifies that "a silence profound as the grave reigns throughout the ruins. Babylon is now a silent scene—a sublime solitude." Rauwolf, in the sixteenth century, says: "The eye wanders over a barren desert, in which the ruins are nearly the only indication that it ever has been inhabited." Keppel remarks: "It is impossible to behold the scene and not be reminded how exactly the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled." The place is also full of "doleful creatures." The lion has his lair among the ruins and caverns; the hyena, the jackal, the owl, and the bat, are there in great numbers. Mignan adds: "Venomous reptiles are very numerous throughout the ruins. . . . On pacing over the loose stones and fragments of brick-work which lay scattered through the immense fabric, and surveying the sublimity of the ruins, I naturally recurred to the time when these walls stood proudly in their original splendor; when the halls were the scenes of festive magnificence, and when they resounded to the voices of those whom

death has long since swept from the earth. This very pile was once the seat of luxury and vice, now abandoned to decay, and exhibiting a melancholy instance of the retribution of Heaven. It stands alone. The solitary habitation of the goat-herd marks not the forsaken site." Frederick, speaking of the ruins of Babylon, says: "Neither of the wall nor of the ditch has been seen the least vestige by any modern traveler. Within twenty-one miles distance along the Euphrates, and twelve miles across it in breadth, I was unable to perceive any thing that could admit of my imagining that either a wall or ditch had existed within this extensive area." Keppel adds: "The divine predictions against Babylon have been so totally fulfilled in the appearance of the ruins, that I am disposed to give the fullest signification to the words of Jeremiah: '*The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken.*'"

Porter describes his emotions, on looking upon the scene, in the following language: "The whole view was particularly solemn. The majestic stream of the Euphrates, wandering in solitude like a pilgrim monarch through the silent ruins of his devastated kingdom, still appeared a noble river, under all the disadvantages of its desert-tracked course. Its banks were hoary with reeds, and the gray osier willows were yet there on which the captives of Israel hung up their harps, and, while Jerusalem was not, refused to be comforted. But how is the rest of the scene changed since then! At that time those broken hills were palaces—those long, undulating mounds, streets—this vast solitude, filled with the busy subjects of the proud daughter of the East; now, wasted with misery, her habitations are not to be found, and, for herself, the worm is spread over her."

We will conclude our remarks, in reference to Babylon, by a quotation from the Rev. Alexander Keith: "Has not every purpose of the Lord been performed against Babylon? What mortal shall give a negative answer to the questions subjoined by the author of these very prophecies?—'Who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I, the Lord? And there is no God beside me—declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, an I will do all my pleasure.' The records of the human race, it has been said with truth, do not present a contrast more striking than that between the primeval magnificence of Babylon and its long desolation. How few spots are there on earth of which we have so clear and faithful a picture as prophecy gave of fallen Babylon, when no spot on earth resembled it less than its present desolate, solitary site! Or could any prophecies respecting any single place be more precise, or wonder

ful, or numerous, or true, or more gradually accomplished through many generations?"

Tyre was another ancient city, once famed for its wealth and commercial importance. During its days of prosperity it was no less remarkable for its luxury, pride, and wickedness, of almost every description, than for its opulence and commercial advantages. As a just punishment for the abominations of its inhabitants, the prophets had predicted its overthrow. In these predictions there are several remarkable specifications which have been fulfilled with great exactness. To some of these we will call attention.

First. It was foretold that Tyre should be destroyed by "Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon." And we have the testimony of Josephus, that this Chaldean king, with his armies, besieged Tyre for thirteen years. He demolished the strong walls of the city, put to the sword the inhabitants who failed to escape in their vessels, plundered the city of its immense treasure, and left it a desolate ruin.

Secondly. It was foretold that, after an interval of *seventy years*, the city should be restored, and the inhabitants should return to their merchandise and their gain; and again, that it should be destroyed the *second* time, and that after this the people would turn away from their idolatry to the worship of the true God. Again, it was foretold that the city should be at length so *totally destroyed* as to become "like the top of a rock—a place to spread nets upon;" and that it should "be built no more."

After the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, it was rebuilt on an island a short distance from the site of the old city. It was predicted that this second city should be *consumed by fire*. This overthrow of the *second* or *insular* Tyre was the work of Alexander the Great. It required him a seven months' siege and immense labor to take the city. Using the rubbish and the dilapidated materials of the old city, he built a causeway from the main land to the island, so that his forces could pass over and bring their engines of war to play upon the walls of the city. Alexander exercised great cruelty toward such as fell into his hands in the taking of Tyre. Eight thousand he put to the sword, two thousand he crucified, and thirty thousand he sold for slaves.

The taking of the city by Nebuchadnezzar is foretold by Ezekiel. Ezek. xxvi. 7–12.

The *seventy years* of desolation that were to intervene before the restoration of the city were foretold by Isaiah and Jeremiah. Isa. xxiii. 15–18; Jer. xxv. 11, 12.

The taking of the insular city by Alexander was predicted by

Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah. Isa. xxiii. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 32; Zech. ix. 3, 4.

That all these prophecies were fulfilled with great exactitude, is testified by the histories of Josephus, Diodorus Siculus, and Quintus Curtius.

But the point which we wish more particularly to note is, the prediction that Tyre should be finally destroyed, and so utterly blotted out as to become "like the top of a rock," and "should be built no more."

Ezekiel says: "And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea." Ezek. xxvi. 4, 5. Again, in the fourteenth verse, he repeats: "And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more." Again: "I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more." Verse 21.

In reference to these prophecies, there is a seeming discrepancy—Tyre is to "be no more," and yet it is still to be "like the top of a rock—a place to spread nets upon." But how exactly is this explained by the event of the fulfillment! for the old part of the city has never been rebuilt—"thou shalt be built no more;" but where the insular city stood there are a few miserable inhabitants who subsist mainly by fishing, and "spread their nets" to dry "upon the rock."

Who can fail to notice the exact accomplishment of the distinct items in these prophecies? Alexander, in the taking of Tyre, formed a "mound from the continent to the island, and the ruins of old Tyre afforded ready materials for the purpose. The soil and rubbish were gathered and heaped; and the mighty conqueror, who afterward failed in raising again any of the ruins of Babylon, cast those of Tyre into the sea, and *scraped* her very *dust* from her. Volney said, in his "Ruins," that "the whole village of Tyre contains only fifty or sixty poor families, who live obscurely on the produce of their little ground and a *trifling fishery.*" With this description agrees that of travelers generally. Bruce says: "Tyre is a rock whereon fishers dry their nets."

Cotovicus visited Syria in 1598. He testifies that "Tyre appears to be utterly ruined, so that it has ceased to be any longer a city, and only some inconsiderable vestiges of her former ruins are now visible. If you except a few arches and baths, and some ruined walls and collapsed towers, and mere rubbish, there is now nothing of Tyre to be discerned."

Maundrell says: "On the north side it has an old, ungarrisoned Turkish castle, besides which you see nothing but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, etc., there being not so much as one entire house left; its present inhabitants only a few poor wretches, harboring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly on *fishing*, who seem to be preserved in this place by Divine Providence, as a visible argument how God has fulfilled his word concerning Tyre, that it should be 'as the top of a rock—a place for fishers to dry their nets on.'"

That we may see the conclusive force of the argument from prophecy, so far as the fate of Tyre, Babylon, Nineveh, and other ancient cities, is concerned, it is only necessary for us to reflect that the predictions concerning any one city can be applied *to it alone.* If the prophets were not divinely inspired, but announced their predictions by mere human sagacity or guess, how happens it that they were never in error, that their guess was never wrong, and their sagacity never at fault? Why is it that the predictions concerning Babylon were not met in the case of Tyre, and those relating to Tyre in the case of Babylon? As Dr. Nelson has sensibly remarked: "Suppose it had been said of some other city besides Babylon, that it should become *pools of water*, and *never more inhabited;* may not our curiosity be somewhat excited when we notice that, of the thousand proud and wicked cities around, the prophet did not happen to write these things of any, Babylon excepted? And had they been written of any other one city, town, or village, that was or has been upon the face of the earth, we know of none where their truth could be seen. These, and the other particulars we have noticed, came to pass many centuries after these books of prophecy were written. May we not inquire, with some degree of wonder: Suppose some writer of the Old Testament had happened to conjecture and write concerning Damascus, Sidon, Jerusalem, Jericho, Nineveh, or any city, town, or village, except Tyre, that the soil on which it stood should be scraped away, and fishermen's nets rest upon its nakedness, who could point to its accomplishment? On the broad surface of the earth, or along the protracted shores of the ocean, the prophet was surely fortunate to hit upon the only spot where these things did happen. Long and dreadful calamities were threatened to Jerusalem; but suppose it had been said that owls and tigers should inhabit pleasant palaces there, how many thousands now would clap their hands, rejoicing that such a conjecture was ever made! Suppose some one, two thousand years ago, had ventured to guess that the time would come when a shepherd would be afraid to drive his flock where Palmyra of the desert then stood, or through Athens, Ephesus, or Rome

—name any spot you please, but one—and where would his reputation stand?"

Another thing to be considered in regard to these predictions concerning particular cities is, that the events foretold are often the most improbable that, according to human reason and foresight, could well be imagined. How strangely improbable was it that the great Nineveh should be so wiped from existence that none could tell where once she stood! How astonishing that the mighty Babylon should be doomed the fee-simple and uncontested heritage of "doleful creatures," ravenous beasts, and poisonous reptiles; and that those rich and fertile plains should be consigned to remediless and perpetual sterility! And how marvelous that the wealthy and magnificent Tyre, at that time the mistress of the ocean and the greatest commercial emporium of the world, and so favorably situated for a perpetual career of wealth, prosperity, and importance, should so soon become a desolation, and the very "dust be scraped" from where she stood and cast into the sea! Though more than two thousand years have passed since the prophetic word was uttered, yet to this day the curious traveler, as he looks upon the spot where ancient Tyre once rose in so much magnificence and grandeur, may behold in the "fishermens' nets" whitening "upon the top of the rock" the "finger of God" pointing to the verification of prophecy, as a demonstration to the world, through its successive ages, that *the Bible is true.* The mightiest achievements of human genius and power, the admiration of nations, and the "wonder of the world," are made tributary to the divine behests; and whether in smoldering ruins or in dreary wastes they yet exist, or whether they have passed from earth away, leaving no trace behind—in either case, those *ruins* and those *wastes,* or the fact that *none such exist,* shall stand before the world as Heaven's visible and abiding witness, that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XV.

QUESTION 1. What prophecy concerning Nineveh is quoted?

2. How is its fulfillment shown?

3. How long before the event had the overthrow of that city been predicted?

4 What reasons may be assigned for the fact that Babylon figures so largely in prophecy?

5. What prophets furnish the most of these predictions?

6 Enumerate some of the most striking, and show how they were fulfilled.

7. What travelers have described the ruins of Babylon, as foretold by prophecy?

8. For what was Tyre once remarkable?

9. What predictions are quoted concerning this city?

10. How is a seeming discrepancy in the prophecy explained?

11. What travelers are quoted concerning Tyre?

12. How were the predictions fulfilled, and what is the proof?

13. What remarkable characteristic had all these predictions?

CHAPTER XVI.

PROPHECIES IN RELATION TO MESSIAH.

In considering the prophecies respecting Messiah, we can but briefly glance at a few of the most important. Although the genuineness and authenticity of the Old Testament, containing these prophecies, have been sufficiently established in a preceding chapter; yet it may be proper here to remark that, in reference to the subject now before us, we have a pledge against the possibility of corruption or interpolation that does not apply so forcibly to any other portion of the Old Testament. This is furnished us by the fact that the Jews, the original and special guardians of these Scriptures, have still in their possession the same Old Testament which they profess to have received from the beginning; and this Jewish copy perfectly corresponds with that now in use among Christians. And as the Jews are known to have ever been the bitterest enemies of Christianity, we may be certain that they never would have changed any of those predictions concerning Messiah so as to favor the Christian cause. Could they have been tempted to undertake such a fraud, they unquestionably would have aimed at such alterations as would have made *against* instead of *for* Christianity. But while the facts just stated secure us against the possibility of any corruption of the record since the coming of Christ, the existence of the Septuagint version, and of the Samaritan copy of the Pentateuch, and various other considerations set forth in a former chapter, demonstrate that there could have been no fraudulent alterations made in these writings for centuries before.

We have every evidence, then, that the nature of the subject admits to satisfy us that all those predictions in the Old Testament, upon which Christians rely as pointing to Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, were written many ages before the coming of our Saviour.

The evidence of Christianity derived from this source may be viewed in its application, either against the *Jew* or against the *infidel*. In the former case, if we can show that these predictions are fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, and never have been or can be fulfilled in any other per-

son, the Jew will necessarily be compelled to admit the truth of Christianity; but in the controversy with infidelity more will be requisite. We must not only show that the prophecies are clearly fulfilled in Jesus Christ, but that they are such as could have proceeded from none but God. If these two points be established, then the truth of Christianity will be demonstrated. That the Jewish nation had for many centuries been looking forward to the advent of an illustrious Deliverer, or Messiah, and that this fact was known to the surrounding nations, cannot be disputed; but the question before us is, Was that Messiah clearly predicted? and were those predictions verified in the person and history of Jesus?

The predictions of the Old Testament relating to Messiah are exceedingly numerous. Besides types, many of which are remarkably plain and striking, and remote allusions, and figurative expressions, which evidently refer to Christ, though with a degree of indirectness, there are as many as *a hundred* passages making a plain and direct reference to him; any one of which, in its fulfillment, furnishes proof that it could only have proceeded from Omniscience. What, then, must be the weight of the testimony when all these evidences are combined?

The first intimation of a coming Messiah is found in a laconic sentence delivered almost immediately after the fall. It was there announced that the "seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent." In this prediction is clearly foretold that unmitigated warfare between good and evil, light and darkness, holiness and sin—the kingdom of God on the one hand, and the kingdom of Satan on the other—which then commenced, and which in every age and in every part of the world has been perpetuated to the present day. We witness it in the crime of Cain and in the faith of Abel, in the preaching of Enoch and Noah and in the wickedness of the antediluvians, in the patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian dispensations, and in every age and everywhere, in the efforts of the bad to corrupt the good, and of the good to reform the bad. Now, we ask, who but Omniscience could, in the world's infancy, have pictured so truthfully its history for all time to come?

This promise was afterward given in an enlarged form to Abraham: "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. xxii. 17, 18. Here we see not only the numerous posterity of Abraham foretold, but also the fact that Messiah was to descend from him, and that all nations were to share the blessings of his reign.

We will now call attention to some of those prophecies of Messiah more specific in their character.

1. The TIME at which he was to appear was distinctly noted in prophecy: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Gen. xlix. 10. In this passage one particular is fixed as to the *time* of Messiah's advent. He was to come before the *scepter* had departed from Judah. Dr. Clarke thinks the true reading of this passage requires the word *tribe* instead *scepter*. If this be correct, then the meaning is, that Shiloh must appear before Judah shall cease to exist as a *distinct tribe*. And so he did—for this distinction of the tribes was not confounded and lost till the nationality of the Jews was destroyed by the Romans a short time after Christ. But let the word be taken as we have it in our version, "scepter," and it may apply either to the political or ecclesiastical "scepter." It is well known that the Romans at the time of our Saviour, though they had conquered and brought the Jews under tribute, did not interfere at all with their religious institutions; and as religion and politics in the Jewish economy were one united system, the Jews were still allowed, to a great extent, to govern themselves; so that when Jesus appeared, the "scepter" had not yet "departed from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet." The Jewish kings were of the family of David, of the tribe of Judah, up to the time of the captivity; and afterward their governors. whether under the Persians, Greeks, or Romans, were continued in the same line. Indeed, when the ten tribes revolted, the tribe of Benjamin was blended with that of Judah; by it the authority of the nation was ever wielded—from it the nation took its name.

The principal members of their Sanhedrim and their chief rulers, though their dominion was sometimes interrupted by foreign interference, always belonged to the tribe of Judah. Thus we see that up to the coming of Jesus the "scepter," in an important sense, was retained by "Judah," and a "lawgiver from between his feet," was recognized. But very soon after that period that "scepter" and "lawgiver" departed; and, in the necessity of the case, must have departed *forever*—for their tribes have been confounded, and their nationality destroyed for many centuries. The "scepter" *has* "departed from Judah," and "Shiloh" *has* "come." Let the wandering and commingled tribes read this prophecy, and believe in Jesus.

Again, the Prophet Daniel, about six hundred years before Christ foretold the very year in which he should suffer death. His words are: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy

holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." Dan. ix. 24.

Agreeably to the unanimous opinion of the learned in Scripture prophecy, *weeks* are to be computed according to the Jewish mode of reckoning *Sabbatic years*, counting each *week* as a *week of years*. Hence, the "seventy weeks" of Daniel amount to just *four hundred and ninety years*.

Dr. Clarke remarks that "most learned men agree that the death of Christ happened at the Passover, in the month *Nisan*, in the *four thousand seven hundred and forty sixth* year of the Julian period. *Four hundred and ninety* years, reckoned back from the above year, leads us directly to the month Nisan in the *four thousand two hundred and fifty-sixth* year of the same period—the very month and year in which Ezra had his commission from Artaxerxes Longimanus, king of Persia (see Ezra vii. 9), to restore and rebuild Jerusalem."

Again, the PLACE in which the Messiah should be born had been named in prophecy. "But thou *Bethlehem* Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel." Micah v. 2.

Isaiah predicted the *miraculous works* of Messiah. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." Read the history of Jesus in the writings of the evangelists, and see how literal the fulfillment.

Once more, in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah there are found so many minute facts in reference to the character, life, and death, of Messiah, which are all so literally fulfilled in the history of Jesus that it is quite impossible to account for the wonderful coincidences, except upon the supposition that the prophecy was written after the crucifixion of Jesus, or that it was dictated by divine inspiration. That the former supposition *cannot be true*, we have already shown beyond the possibility of a reasonable doubt; and that the latter *must be true*, we are compelled to believe, or discard the dictates of common sense.

But let us look at some of these minutely descriptive items. Messiah was to be manifested in a *low and humble condition:* "He hath no form nor comeliness, and no beauty that we should desire him." He was to be treated with *contempt:* "He was despised and rejected of men . . . we esteemed him not." He was to be a man of great *grief* and *sorrow:* "A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our

faces from him." He was to *suffer for others:* "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." He was to be *meek* and *submissive* amid his sufferings: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." He was to be *harmless* and *blameless* in his life: "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." He was to be put to death under circumstances of *ignominy:* "He was numbered with the transgressors." He was to be honored in his *burial:* He was "with the rich in his death." He was to *intercede* for others: "He made intercession for the transgressors."

It is impossible for any one to read this life-like picture of the Messiah, and compare it with the history of Jesus as portrayed by the evangelists, without being impressed with the conviction that the one is the exact similitude of the other. No painter ever drew a picture more like the original than is this description of Isaiah like the reality we behold in the life and death of Jesus. As we read the prophet's simple and pathetic statements, we can almost see the blessed Saviour as looking down upon Jerusalem he "wept over it," or as standing at the tomb of Lazarus he mingled his tears with those of Martha and Mary, or when he came near the final tragedy as he stood first before Caiaphas, then before Pilate, next before Herod, then again before Pilate, and lastly on the Mount of Crucifixion. In all the scenes here exhibited we see the exact pencilings of the prophet, only that the lines are more distinct and the colors more vivid. Who can contemplate these glowing prophecies, and mark the exact accomplishment in every particular, and fail to recognize the hand of God? Isaiah wrote nearly six hundred years before Jesus was born, yet he describes his character as though every scene in his history were then before his eyes. Is this the result of mere human foresight? Can it be the achievement of chance? And how can we account for the fact, that of all the thousands of the descendants of Abraham these predictions are all fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, and in him alone? Surely *he is the Messiah,* and *the Bible is true*

Numerous other minute circumstances concerning Messiah were predicted in the Old Testament, a few of which we here mention. He was to be *born of a virgin* (Isa. vii. 14). He was to come in *the spirit and power of Elijah* (Malachi iii. 1, 4, 5). He was to be *a prophet* (Deut. xvii. 15–18). He was to enter Jerusalem *riding upon an ass* (Zech. ix. 9). He was to be betrayed and sold for *thirty pieces*

of silver (Zech. xi. 12). With his price *the potter's field was to be bought* (Zech. xi. 13). That *vinegar and gall* should be given him in his thirst, and *lots cast for his vesture* (Ps. xxii. 18). That *not a bone of him should be broken* (Ps. xxxiv. 20). That his side *should be pierced* (Zech. xii. 10). That he should teach *in parables* (Ps. lxxviii. 2).

How remarkably and exactly all these predictions were fulfilled in Jesus, we need not show: the New Testament reader is familiar with the facts. How shall we account for these minute predictions, and their exact fulfillment? "There is no possible means of evading the evidence of the fulfillment of these predictions in the person of our Lord, unless it could be shown that Jesus and his disciples, by some kind of concert, made the events of his life and death to correspond with the prophecies, in order to substantiate his claim to the Messiahship. No infidel has ever been so absurd as to hazard this opinion, except Lord Bolingbroke; and his observations may be taken as a most triumphant proof of the force of this evidence from *prophecy*, when an hypothesis so extravagant was resorted to by an acute mind in order to evade it. This noble writer asserts that Jesus Christ brought on his own death by a series of willful and preconcerted measures, merely to give his disciples the triumph of an appeal to the old prophecies. But this hypothesis does not reach the case; and to have succeeded, he ought to have shown that our Lord preconcerted his descent from David, his being born of a virgin, his birth at Bethlehem, and his wonderful endowments of eloquence and wisdom; that, by some means or other, he willfully made the Jews ungrateful to him, who healed their sick and cleansed their lepers; and that he not only contrived his own death, but his resurrection and his ascension also, and the spread of his religion in opposition to human opinion and human power, in order to give his disciples the triumph of an appeal to the prophecies! These subterfuges of infidels concede the point, and show that the truth cannot be denied but by doing the utmost violence to the understanding." (Watson's Institutes.)

We close our remarks on the prophecies of the Old Testament in the language of Bishop Hurd:

"1. That prophecy is of a prodigious *extent*—that it commenced from the fall of man, and reaches to the consummation of all things; that for many ages it was delivered darkly to few persons, and with large intervals from the date of one prophecy to that of another, but at length became more clear, more frequent, and was uniformly carried on in the line of one people, separated from the rest of the world, among other reasons assigned for this, principally to be the repository of the divine oracles; that, with some intermission, the spirit of proph-

ecy subsisted among that people to the coming of Christ; that he himself, and his apostles, exercised this power in the most conspicuous manner, and left behind them many predictions recorded in the books of the New Testament, which profess to respect very distant events, and even run out to the end of time, or, in St. John's expression, to that period *when the mystery of God shall be perfected* (Rev. x. 7).

"2. Farther, besides the extent of this prophetic scheme, the dignity of the *person* whom it concerns deserves our consideration. He is described in terms which excite the most august and magnificent ideas. He is spoken of, indeed, sometimes as being *the seed of the woman*, and as *the Son of man*, yet so as being at the same time of more than mortal extraction. He is even represented to us as being superior to men and angels—as far above all principality and power, above all that is accounted great, whether in heaven or in earth—as the word and wisdom of God—as the eternal Son of the Father—as the heir of all things, by whom he made the world—as the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. We have no words to denote greater ideas than these: the mind of man cannot elevate itself to nobler conceptions. Of such transcendent worth and excellence is that Jesus said to be to whom all the prophets bear witness.

"3. Lastly, the declared *purpose* for which the Messiah, prefigured by so long a train of prophecy, came into the world corresponds to all the rest of the representation. It was not to deliver an oppressed nation from civil tyranny, or to erect a great civil empire, that is to achieve one of those acts which history counts most heroic. No; it was not a mighty state, a *victor people*—'*Non res Romanæ perituraque regna*'—that was worthy to enter into the contemplation of this divine person. It was another and far sublimer purpose which he came to accomplish—a purpose in comparison of which all our policies are poor and little, and all the performances of man as nothing. It was to deliver a world from ruin—to abolish sin and death—to purify and immortalize human nature; and thus, in the most exalted sense of the words, to be the Saviour of all men and the blessing of all nations. There is no exaggeration in this account. I deliver the undoubted sense, if not always the very words, of Scripture. Consider, then, to what this representation amounts. Let us unite the several parts of it and bring them to a point. A spirit of prophecy pervading all time, characterizing one person of the highest dignity, and proclaiming the accomplishment of one purpose, the most beneficent, the most divine, that imagination itself can project. Such is the scriptural delineation, whether we will receive it or no, of that economy which we call prophetic."

A brief reference to some of the predictions of our Saviour will close this chapter, and all we intend to present on the evidence of prophecy.

Our blessed Saviour several times foretold to his disciples *his own death*, with several of the accompanying circumstances: that it should occur *at Jerusalem*—that the *chief priests and scribes* should arrest and arraign him, but deliver him over to *the Gentiles* to be mocked, scourged, and crucified—that Judas should *betray* him, *Peter* deny him, and *all the disciples* forsake him.

Again, he very emphatically predicted his *resurrection on the third day.*

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, which was so abundantly established in a preceding chapter, is a very important fact in connection with the evidences of Christianity. It is a double testimony, either division of which, taken by itself, would be irresistibly conclusive on the question, but when both are taken together, assurance is rendered doubly sure. In the first place, the resurrection of Christ from the dead, had he never foretold it at all, furnishes the most indubitable evidence of the truth of his religion; in the second place, the fact that his resurrection had been plainly predicted by himself, and that it took place at the time and as he had predicted, demonstrates the divinity of his mission on the ground of the fulfillment of prophecy. Hence it is obvious that, in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the truth of his religion is proved both by the *fact* of his resurrection, which is a miracle of *power*, and by the *fulfillment* of his prediction, which is a miracle of *knowledge.*

He also predicted the *descent of the Holy Spirit* on the apostles in *miraculous powers and gifts*, and specified *Jerusalem* as the *place* at which this promise should be fulfilled. He farther specified the *effects* that should follow their possession of the miraculous powers thus conferred—that they should cast out devils, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it should not hurt them. The Acts of the Apostles furnishes abundant testimony of the complete accomplishment of all these predictions.

Finally, Jesus Christ, in a very formal, solemn, and specific manner, foretold the destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem. He specified that so complete should be this destruction, that "not one stone should be left upon another;" and that Jerusalem should be trodden under foot by the Gentiles, till the time of the Gentiles should be fulfilled; and that this overthrow of the temple and city should take place before that generation should pass away. About forty years after this prediction was uttered the city was taken by the Romans, and the

temple razed to the ground. It has never been rebuilt. The apostate Emperor Julian collected the Jews from all countries, and, under the conduct of his favorite Alypius, sent them to rebuild their temple. Thus aided and assisted by all the powerful appliances this mighty potentate could command, when stirred to energy by his malice against Christianity, they went forth resolved to rebuild the temple, and thus confront and defeat the predictions of Jesus; but, while inflated with the prospect of immediate success, they were suddenly seized with a panic, and driven in confusion from the place of their operations. It is testified by several historians—and, among them, by Ammianus Marcellinus, a pagan philosopher, and an intimate friend of Julian—that "horrible balls of fire, breaking out near the foundation with frequent and reiterated attacks, rendered the place from time to time inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen; and that the victorious element continuing in this manner, obstinately bent, as it were, to repel their attempts, the enterprise was abandoned."

Now we ask, What probability was there, at the time this destruction of Jerusalem was foretold, that any thing of the kind would so soon occur? The Jews were then a very feeble people, and it would seem exceedingly unreasonable to expect that they would soon attempt a conflict with so mighty a power as the Empire of Rome. The Gospels recording these predictions were published in the land of Judea—that of St. Matthew at least twenty or thirty years before the events in question transpired, and the others a very few years afterward; and all of them several years before the destruction of Jerusalem. Antiquity testifies that all the apostles, except John, were dead before the Romans, under Titus, invaded Judea; and it so happens that he is the only one of the evangelical authors who makes no mention of these events.

These events were to be preceded by *signs*. False Christs were to arise; seditions, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, and wonderful appearances in the heavens; persecutions and apostasies of the disciples, and wickedness of the people—*these* were to be precursors of the judgment on Jerusalem. The city and temple were not only to be totally destroyed, but many were to perish by the sword, and great numbers be carried into captivity, and the tribulation was to surpass any thing that had ever before been witnessed in the world; the Jewish Commonwealth was to be entirely overthrown, and the Jews themselves dispersed among all the nations of the earth; the Christians, being warned by Christ to flee to the mountains, were thus to escape.

It is a remarkable fact, that the principal historian who records the

series of events which embody the fulfillment of these predictions, is Josephus, a learned Jew of the sacerdotal order. That *he* should designedly have shaped his history to favor the Christian cause, is a supposition too absurd to be entertained. But his testimony is corroborated by that of Philo, another Jewish historian, as also by the writings of Suetonius, Tacitus, and Seneca.

The language of Josephus, in describing the calamities of these events, is the same in substance with that of the prediction. Christ says: "There shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be." Josephus says: "The calamities of all people from the creation of the world, if they be compared with those suffered by the Jews, will be found to be far surpassed by them." Titus, the Roman General, who, after seven months' siege, took the city, after a survey of its immense fortifications, exclaims: "By the help of God we have brought this war to a conclusion. It was God who drew out the Jews from these fortifications; for what could the hands or military engines of men avail against such towers as these?"

That all these predictions of Christ concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, with its accompanying circumstances and the events that were to follow, have been most specifically and certainly fulfilled up to the present period, cannot be questioned, unless we discredit the concurrent testimony of the most reputable Jewish and pagan historians of those times.

Having thus concluded our glance at the evidence of Christianity from prophecy, omitting entirely many predictions which might have been cited, and taking a much more cursory view of most of those we have noticed than the subjects might seem to demand, yet we are fully persuaded that the evidence we have presented is sufficient to carry the conviction to every candid mind, that *the Bible is in truth the word of God.*

Few, if any, of the *objections* of infidels to the evidence from prophecy are at all applicable to those predictions which we have had under review. If this statement be correct—which, we think, will be generally admitted—then it will follow that, admitting the validity of those objections (which we are far from doing) in reference to those prophecies to which they may be thought to be applicable, yet they cannot weaken the force of the evidence derived from the passages we have adduced. It cannot be claimed, in reference to any of *these* predictions, that they were written *after the events;* it cannot be alleged that, like the heathen oracles, they were delivered in *general*, *vague*, or *am-*

biguous terms; it cannot be maintained that any of them have *failed in the fulfillment;* nor can it be said that any of them are *frivolous* or *fanatical* in their nature. On the contrary, it is as clear as evidence can render any truth of the kind, that they were all written *before* (and many of them *thousands of years before*) the events; that they were expressed in language *minute, definite,* and *perspicuous;* that they have been fulfilled with *remarkable exactitude;* and that they refer to events of the most *serious* and *important* nature—in a word, they are predictions, in their character and circumstances, worthy of God, from whom they emanated, and most clearly demonstrative of the divine legation of those who delivered them, and of the truth and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. Let the sinner examine and weigh them well, and receive, believe, and obey the truth, and gain eternal life; or reject, deride, and rebel, and perish everlastingly!

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XVI.

QUESTION 1. What evidence do the Jews furnish that the prophecies concerning Messiah have not been interpolated since his advent?

2. By what evidence is it proved that they could not have been corrupted for centuries before?

3. How may the evidence from prophecy be viewed in its application?

4. What number of plain predictions concerning Messiah are found in the Old Testament?

5. What are some of these predictions, of a *specific* character?

6. What is the proof from the prophecy of Daniel's "seventy weeks"?

7. What prophet foretold the place of Christ's birth?

8. What prophet foretold his miracles and sufferings?

9. What other minute circumstances were foretold concerning him?

10. In what sense were his predictions of his death a *double* miracle?

11. How is it proved that his prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem was fulfilled?

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SUCCESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE argument in favor of revelation founded on the *success* of Christianity, by some authors, has been embraced under the general division of *external* evidences; and by others, under what they term, *collateral* evidences. But as, in our arrangement, the *collateral* division is entirely omitted, and the whole included within the two general divisions of *external* and *internal*, we think the evidence founded on the success of Christianity more naturally falls under the head of the *external* evidences. We think this kind of testimony is as properly embraced under the division to which we have assigned it as is that arising from miracles or prophecy. Indeed, the evidence from the success of the gospel is so closely allied to both that which is founded upon miracles and that which is founded upon prophecy, that some authors have considered it under the one head, and some under the other. But this will be more manifest as we proceed to analyze the argument now to be discussed.

The truth of Christianity may be established, from the great success which attended the first promulgation of the gospel, in two ways: *First*, this success had been abundantly predicted not only by the Old Testament prophets, but also by our Saviour himself; hence the fulfillment of this prediction amounts to a *prophetic* argument in favor of Christianity, independent of any divine interposition by which that success may have been produced. *Secondly*, the means by which this success was effected were entirely inadequate to produce it, without divine interposition; hence the realization of the success, under the circumstances, is evidence that it was effected by divine interposition, and, consequently, this amounts to *miraculous* testimony in favor of Christianity. It follows, therefore, that if the several parts of this argument, as just presented, be satisfactorily sustained, it will afford us a moral demonstration, both prophetic and miraculous, that Christianity is true.

The first elementary part of the argument, as just stated, requires us to show that this great success of Christianity had been *foretold by*

prophecy. That such was the fact, no reader of the Bible can dispute. In the predictions of those prophets and righteous men, who spoke of the coming Messiah, they dealt extensively, and with rapture, upon the victorious conquests and prosperity of his kingdom. They portrayed his triumphs in the following strain: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." "Behold, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers." "For the Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." "The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh."

That these predictions refer to Messiah's reign, even the bigoted Jew cannot deny. And what language could depict in colors more vivid the conquests of his kingdom?

Our Saviour's own predictions on the subject are equally explicit. He said to his apostles: "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." And again: "This gospel of the kingdom shall first be preached to all the world for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come."

From all these Scriptures, it is very manifest that the great success of Christianity had been foretold in prophecy; and thus the first element of our argument is sustained.

The next question before us is this: Did Christianity, in the first ages of its promulgation, meet with a remarkable degree of success? On this question, our first authority is the Acts of the Apostles. Here we learn that at the opening of the gospel dispensation at Pentecost *three thousand* souls, in one day, were converted and added to the Church; and, a few days afterward, about *two thousand* were converted in one day. And the book of the apostolic Acts is but one continuous record of the labors, the persecutions, and abundant successes of the apostles. It appears from this sacred record alone that in a few years many thou-

sands, and some from all classes of society, were converted through the labors of the apostles—not only in Jerusalem and throughout Judea, but at Rome, Ephesus, Corinth, Galatia, Thessalonica, and almost all parts of the Roman Empire.

Our next testimony as to the great success of the gospel, in that early period of its history, is derived from the Christian writers of that day.

Justin Martyr, a learned divine of the second century, published, about the year 146, a work called "A Dialogue with Trypho the Jew," in which he uses these words: "There is no nation, whether of barbarians or Greeks, whether they live in wagons or tents, amongst whom prayers are not made to the Father and Creator of all through the name of the crucified Jesus."

Tertullian, who flourished about the close of the second century, writes thus: "In whom but the Christ now come have all nations believed? for in whom do all other nations (but yours, the Jews) confide? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, Armenia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, and the inhabitants of Pontus, Asia, and Pamphylia, the dwellers in Egypt, and the inhabitants of Africa beyond Cyrene, Romans and strangers, and in Jerusalem, both Jews and proselytes; so that the various tribes of the Getuli and the numerous hordes of the Mauri, all the Spanish clans and different nations of Gauls, and the provinces of the Britons (inaccessible to the Romans, but subdued by Christ), and of the Samaritans, and Dacians, and Germans, and Scythians, and many unexplored nations, and countries, and islands unknown to us, and which we cannot enumerate—in all which places the name of the CHRIST who has come now reigns, for who could reign over all these but Christ the Son of God?"

The same author, in a letter to the Proconsul of Africa, in which province Tertullian himself also resided, speaks as follows: "If we Christians were disposed to array ourselves as open or secret enemies of our opposers, a sufficient force of numbers is not wanting to us. Many of the Moors and Marcomanni, as well as other tribes more remote, even to the very ends of the earth and throughout the world, are with us. We are but of yesterday, and yet we have filled all your places—your cities, your islands, your castles, your towns, your council-houses, your very camps, your tribes, your palace, your senate, your forum. We have left you nothing but your temples. If we should break away from you, and should remove into some other country, the mere loss of so many citizens would overwhelm your government; and would itself be an effectual punishment. Doubtless you would be

frightened at your own solitude. The silence and stupor which you would witness would cause the world over which you reign to appear as dead. Your enemies would then be more than your citizens who should remain."

Undoubted as this testimony of the early Christian Fathers must be considered, since their apologies were public papers addressed to the emperors and magistrates of the Roman Government; yet, as the mere fact that they were Christians may excite suspicion against the truthfulness of their statements, we will now adduce the testimony of pagan historians to the same effect.

The celebrated Roman historian, Tacitus, lived contemporary with the apostles, in the first century, and none have questioned his integrity as a chronicler of the events of his day. In giving an account of the great fire which reduced to ashes the city of Rome, he says: "But neither by human aid nor by the costly largesses by which he attempted to propitiate the gods was the prince able to remove from himself the infamy which had attached to him in the opinion of all for having ordered the conflagration. To suppress this rumor, therefore, Nero caused others to be accused, on whom he inflicted exquisite torments, who were already hated by the people for their crimes, and were vulgarly denominated CHRISTIANS. This name they derived from CHRIST, their leader, who, in the reign of Tiberias, was put to death as a criminal while Pontius Pilate was procurator. This destructive superstition, repressed for a while, again broke out, and spread not only through Judea, where it originated, but reached this city also, into which flow all things that are vile and abominable, and where they are encouraged. At first they only were seized who confessed that they belonged to this sect, and afterward a vast multitude by the information of those who were condemned not so much for the crime of burning the city as for hatred of the human race. These, clothed in the skins of wild beasts, were exposed to derision, and were either torn to pieces by dogs or were affixed to crosses; or, when the daylight was passed, were set on fire that they might serve instead of lamps for the night."

The reputation of Suetonius, another Roman historian, is also well established. He speaks as follows: "He (Claudius) banished the Jews from Rome, who were continually raising disturbances, Christ (Chrestus) being their leader." In the Life of Nero, the same author says, "The Christians were punished, a sort of men of a new and magical religion."

Pliny the younger was also a Roman writer, renowned for his intelligence and veracity. This learned philosopher, in the beginning of

the second century, wrote a letter to the Emperor Trajan, containing the most satisfactory testimony to the point in hand. He speaks as follows: "Pliny to the Emperor Trajan wisheth health," etc. "It is my custom, sir, to refer all things to you of which I entertain any doubt; for who can better direct me in my hesitation or instruct my ignorance? I was never before present at any of the trials of the Christians, so that I am ignorant both of the matter to be inquired into and of the nature of the punishment which should be inflicted, and to what length the investigation is to be extended. I have, moreover, been in great uncertainty whether any difference ought to be made on account of age, between the young and tender and the robust; and, also, whether any place should be allowed for repentance and pardon, or whether those who have once been Christians should be punished, although they have now ceased to be such, and whether punishment should be inflicted merely on account of the name where no crimes are charged, or whether crimes connected with the name are the proper objects of punishment. This, however, is the method which I have pursued in regard to those who were brought before me as Christians. I interrogated them whether they were Christians; and, upon their confessing that they were, I put the question to them a second and a third time, threatening them with capital punishment; and when they persisted in their confession, I ordered them to be led away to execution—for, whatever might be the nature of their crime, I could not doubt that perverseness and inflexible obstinacy deserve to be punished. There were others, addicted to the same insanity, whom, because they were Roman citizens, I have noted down to be sent to the city. In a short space, the crime diffusing itself, as is common, a great variety of cases have fallen under my cognizance. An anonymous libel was exhibited to me, containing the names of many persons who denied that they were Christians or ever had been, and, as an evidence of their sincerity, they joined me in an address to the gods, and to your image which I had ordered to be brought along with the images of the gods for this very purpose. Moreover, they sacrificed with wine and frankincense, and blasphemed the name of Christ, none of which things can those who are really Christians be constrained to do; therefore, I judged it proper to dismiss them. Others, named by the informer, at first confessed themselves to be Christians, and afterward denied it; and some asserted that, although they had been Christians, they had ceased to be such for more than three years, and some as much as twenty years. All these worshiped your image and the statues of the gods, and execrated Christ. But they affirmed that this was the sum of their fault

or error: that they were accustomed, on a stated day, to meet together before day, to sing a hymn to Christ in concert, as to a god, and to bind themselves by a solemn oath not to commit any wickedness, but, on the contrary, to abstain from theft, robbery, and adultery; also, never to violate their promise nor deny a pledge committed to them. These things being performed, it was their custom to separate, and to meet again at a promiscuous, innocent meal, which, however, they had omitted from the time of the publication of my edict, by which, according to your orders, I forbade assemblies of this sort. On receiving this account, I judged it to be more necessary to examine by torture two females who were called deaconesses; but I discovered nothing except a depraved and immoderate superstition. Whereupon, suspending farther judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice; for it has appeared to me that the subject is highly deserving of consideration, especially on account of the great number of persons whose lives are put into jeopardy. Many persons of all ages, sexes, and conditions are accused, and many more will be in the same situation; for the contagion of this superstition has not merely pervaded the cities, but also all villages and country places, yet it seems to me that it might be restrained and corrected. It is a matter of fact, that the temples which were almost deserted begin again to be frequented, and the sacred solemnities which had been long intermitted are again attended; and victims for the altars are now readily sold, which awhile ago were almost without purchasers. Whence it is easy to conjecture what a multitude of men might be reclaimed, if only the door to repentance was left open."

The Emperor's reply to this letter was as follows: "Trajan to Pliny: Health and happiness. You have taken the right method, my Pliny, in dealing with those who have been brought before you as Christians; for it is impossible to establish any universal rule which will apply to all cases. They should not be sought after; but, when they are brought before you and convicted, they must be punished. Nevertheless, if any one dēny that he is a Christian, and confirm his assertion by his conduct—that is, by worshiping our gods—although he may be suspected of having been one in time past, let him obtain pardon on repentance. But in no case permit a libel against any one to be received, unless it be signed by the person who presents it, for that would be a dangerous precedent, and in nowise suitable to the present age."

Much additional testimony to the same import, both from Christian and pagan writers, might be adduced; but we deem it superfluous to add any thing farther, except to refer to the well-known and important

fact that such had been the extent to which the Christian religion had spread and triumphed, that as early as the commencement of the fourth century, which was little over two hundred years from the death of the last of the apostles, it became the established religion of the vast Roman Empire. This mighty revolution was effected by Constantine the Great on his ascending the imperial throne. Whether he had become a *real* convert to Christianity, or whether he merely adopted it as the religion of the empire through political motives, matters nothing so far as the question before us is concerned. If he was a *real* convert, it shows the position and influence to which Christianity must have attained to arrest the attention and gain the approval of so illustrious a personage; and, moreover, to induce him to proclaim *it* as the religion of the state. But if he was influenced in the case solely by considerations of statesmanship, then we have the best of proof that Christianity at that early period of its history had gained the ascendency over paganism, and become the most influential religion of the empire. From what has been presented, it cannot be denied that the success of Christianity, from its first promulgation till it had overspread the Roman Empire, was astonishingly great, furnishing in the fact an evident fulfillment of the predictions of the prophets and of Christ on the subject.

According to the statement of our argument, the next question to be considered is this: Were the means used in producing this success adequate to effect it without the aid of divine interposition? In order to a proper understanding of this subject, there are two points to be particularly considered: *First*, the *feebleness* of the human instrumentalities to be employed in the work; *secondly*, the *magnitude* of the difficulties in the way of its accomplishment.

If it appears that the means are not so feeble, nor the interposing difficulties so great, but that Christianity might have secured the success with which it was crowned without the aid of divine interposition, then our argument, so far as grounded upon the fact that a miracle of *power* was performed in effecting this success, must be set aside; but that would not weaken the argument, so far as it is based on the fulfillment of prophecy, or on the performance of a miracle of *knowledge*. On the contrary, should it appear that the means or instrumentalities admitted in the case are inadequate to the contemplated success without divine interposition, then it will follow that our argument is sustained in both its branches, and these branches will mutually strengthen each other.

But we now proceed to contemplate the human instrumentalities set apart and employed for the establishment and spread of the gospel.

What were these? We see no conclave of far-seeing politicians or wise philosophers uniting their councils to mature and digest a plan to uproot all the deepest prejudices of nations, and to revolutionize the religion of the world—no array of eloquent orators going forth from the schools to entrance and overwhelm, with the "wisdom of words," all the nations of the earth, and win them to a new religion — no mighty armies and navies waiting the bidding of an ambitious potentate to go forth in battle to overthrow the kingdoms and empires of the world! None of *these* instrumentalities were employed by Him who said: "My kingdom is not of this world."

But what *do* we behold? According to the showing of infidelity, only a few obscure, illiterate, humble peasants — fishermen, tent-makers, or tax-gatherers—without science or eloquence, without wealth or power, without popularity or influence, or armies or navies, or sword or scrip, going forth to battle against prejudice, and power, and eloquence, and learning—against kings and priests—against philosophy and superstition — against the bigotry of the Jew and the idolatry of the pagan—against the deadly hate and malice of all. And for what? Let infidelity answer, and it will tell you, to uphold and promote the cause of an impostor — an impostor who had deceived and deluded them for years, and who at last had been executed in disgrace; and, to crown all, according to infidelity, one whom they knew to be such! Now we ask, according to all the laws by which men and minds are governed—according to the philosophy of human nature —Is it not morally impossible, unless upon the hypothesis that the apostles were insane, that they should ever have *attempted* the promulgation of the gospel in the name of Jesus, much less that they should have gained *signal* success in the enterprise, unless they had been assured, not only of his divinity and resurrection, but also of his miraculous assistance in their work?

But, admitting that they were sufficiently demented to have made the attempt, would they have selected Jerusalem as the theater of their commencement—that very city in which their Master, only a few weeks previously, had been crucified as a malefactor—in the midst of that very community who were so familiar with all his deceptions, if such they were—who had it in their power to expose all the false statements of his disciples concerning his resurrection, if he had not arisen; and, above all, who were so deeply enraged against him and his followers—under all these circumstances, would they have selected Jerusalem as the place of their first operations? And *how* can we account for their instant and abundant success?

Admit the truth of Christianity, and all is plain—*deny* it, and all is inexplicable They were assured of the divinity and resurrection of Jesus; they confided in his promise, that they should be "endued with power from on high," and waited for its fulfillment. The Holy Ghost came: they spake with tongues they had never learned, and were able to say to all who doubted the divinity of their mission or the resurrection of their Master, "Bring forth your deaf, your blind, your lame, your sick, and, in the name of Jesus, we will heal them; bring forth your dead, and, in *his* name, we will raise them to life again!" But for the "power from on high" with which the apostles were endued, they never could have established a Church in Jerusalem, or anywhere else—but for *this*, they never could have encountered the powerful opposition, both from Jews and pagans, by which they were withstood, or, having encountered it, according to all human calculation they would have been instantly overwhelmed and crushed beneath its weight. They "preached Jesus and the resurrection" with success, because *he* who had said, "Lo, I am with you alway," ever accompanied them, "bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost."

The circumstances of the *age* and *countries* in which Christianity was first presented, rendered success in the enterprise, by means and instrumentalities so feeble and insignificant, a moral impossibility, except upon the supposition that the apostles received "help from God." Had Christianity originated during the *dark ages*, when learning and science were almost forgotten or unknown, and the whole world was shrouded in ignorance, it might be pleaded that designing men had practiced deception upon the benighted multitudes, and led them blindly to embrace a delusion; but, as if it were designed by Providence that this plea of infidelity should be forever forestalled, Christianity arose and established its claims in the most enlightened period of the world's history. Jesus Christ appeared in the Augustan age, so justly celebrated for the general diffusion of intelligence and the prosperous condition of philosophy, science, and learning. The world had never before been so well prepared for the critical examination of the claims of a new religion, or the ready detection of the false pretensions and cunningly-devised frauds of an impostor.

Another circumstance rendering that age a peculiarly favorable juncture, either for the establishment of the claims of a true religion or for the detection and exposure of an imposture, is the fact that the Roman Empire had then gained the height of its greatness, and had overspread by its influence the enlightened world, rendering tributary to its domin-

ion nearly every civilized nation upon the globe. This circumstance, added to the fact that it was a time of universal peace, rendered *that* the period of all others the most *auspicious* for the promulgation and success of a *true religion*, but the most *inauspicious* for the success of a *fraud*. Philosophers and men of learning abounded almost everywhere in the cities and large towns; their means of mutual communication and intercourse were easy and abundant; they had leisure for study and patient examination; and there was no great political revolution or exciting war in progress to distract the mind or interrupt the process of investigation. At such a time, and under such circumstances, are those poor fishermen of Galilee capable of palming a gross deception upon the world, and, in a few years, revolutionizing its religion?

But let us look at the *places* selected for their operations. They did not wander to some remote and obscure corner of the empire—distant from Jerusalem, the scene of the ministry and miracles of Jesus and the center of Jewish learning and influence, and far away from Rome, the seat of empire and power—but they lifted the standard right at *Jerusalem*, where, in a few months, they had many thousands of converts. At Rome, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Damascus, Antioch, Philippi, and throughout all the towns and cities in their reach, they stood forth preaching the gospel with great success. Wherever Jewish prejudice was the most inveterate, or Jewish malice the most vindictive, *there* they hasted to unfurl the banner of the cross, and *there* they founded flourishing Churches; wherever among the pagans was found the center of philosophy or the stronghold of idolatry, *there* they proceeded at once, boldly proclaiming salvation in the name of the crucified One, and calling upon all to abandon the worship of "dumb idols."

But who were their *opponents* in this conflict? All parties, and sects, and orders, among the Jews. The Essenes, the Herodians, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the scribes and the priests, the rulers and the elders, the members of the Sanhedrim, and the doctors of the law, all stood up as the bitter enemies and persecutors of the despicable "sect of the Nazarenes;" but among all these the apostles gained converts, and founded Churches in their midst.

Among the Gentiles they were met and opposed by emperors, kings, proconsuls, governors, magistrates, and all in authority; by Platonists, Peripatetics, Epicureans, and all the philosophical sects; by the rulers of state, and the priests of religion—in a word, by the learning and eloquence, power and prejudice, pride and malice, of the whole world.

Christians were ridiculed, slandered, reviled, hated, persecuted, imprisoned, scourged, beheaded, drowned, thrown to wild beasts, crucified, burned, and "killed all the day long;" yet the Church spread and prospered more and more, and thus "mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."

The *inducements* held forth by Jesus and his apostles to enlist disciples, were not such as were calculated to promote success upon mere natural principles. Neither riches, nor honors, nor pleasures, were promised his followers, but toil and poverty, tribulation and ignominy, persecution and death—*these* were the earthly rewards of Him who said, "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Are such terms of discipleship as *these* the marks of imposture? Did human wisdom ever suggest a scheme like *this* to win the support of men? What *could* induce a designing deceiver to propose such terms? In the absence of heroic daring, resulting from a firm conviction of the truth and an abiding confidence in the divine aid, how *could* sane men have hoped for success when exhibiting such terms as these? Supernatural interposition apart, what could be imagined better calculated to *prevent* success than this initiating maxim of Jesus: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me?"

Look also at the general tenor of the *precepts* and *promises* of Christianity. In this religion, "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," must be forsaken, the sinful propensities of unsanctified humanity renounced, and a life of holiness pursued. Is this the device of an impostor? To win adherents to his cause, would *he* prescribe sacrifices at the very threshold which only *can* be made by the exercise of the loftiest species of moral heroism of which our nature is capable? To pluck out the right eye, to cut off the right hand—*these* are precepts which no impostor *could* have invented or *would* have enjoined. They fully attest the divinity of the gospel, and clearly demonstrate the impossibility of its success, except through the influence of a principle of heavenly origin, conferred by divine interposition, changing the current of the heart and transforming the texture of the life.

And what were the *promises* of this religion in connection with the life to come? Were they calculated to win the approval and secure the devotion of man's corrupt and sensual nature? Taking the moral nature of man as we know from experience and observation that it *really is*, its whole current is in direct antagonism to the purity and holiness of the gospel, as enjoined in *this* life, and to its unearthly and spiritual rewards, as promised in the life *to come*. It tells of no fountains

of worldly honors, or riches, or pleasures, in reference to *this* world, and gives no promise of Elysian fields of sensual delight in reference to the world to come. We conclude, therefore, that the terms of discipleship and the moral precepts and heavenly promises of the gospel are all of such a nature as to preclude the possibility of success but upon the supposition that divine interposition is afforded.

Infidelity, staggering under the weight of the argument for the truth of Christianity derived from its success, has attempted to account for this success on natural principles alone. The author of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" has exhibited, as adequate to this purpose, the following "secondary causes": 1. "The inflexible and intolerant zeal of the Christians, derived, it is true, from the Jewish religion, but purified from the narrow and unsocial spirit which, instead of inviting, had deterred the Gentiles from embracing the law of Moses." 2. "The doctrine of a future life, improved by every additional circumstance which could give weight and efficiency to that important truth." 3. "The miraculous powers of the primitive Church." 4. "The virtues of the primitive Christians." 5. "The union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman Empire."

Referring those who wish to see a full and complete answer to Mr. Gibbon's chapter on this subject to the treatises by Bishop Watson and Lord Hailes in reply to Gibbon, we here append a remark or two in reference to each of these five "secondary causes:"

1. As to the "*zeal* of the Christians," so far as it was a pure and holy principle consistent with the genius of Christianity, it is acknowledged to have been a very powerful cause in securing the success of Christianity. But then *it* was not "derived from the Jewish religion," but from a firm conviction of the truth and importance of Christianity, resulting from the most satisfactory evidence of the divine interposition in its establishment. But if a *bigoted intolerance*, inconsistent with the mild precepts of the gospel, be charged upon the Christians, *that* would have been more likely to prevent than to promote success.

In reference to the *second cause*—"the doctrine of a future life"—*this*, it is true, was an element of apostolic success; but then it was founded on the attested fact of the resurrection of Jesus and the repeated miraculous assurances of the Holy Spirit, and, of course, cannot be considered a mere *natural* or *secondary* cause.

As to Mr. Gibbon's *third* cause—"the miraculous powers of the primitive Church"—these miracles must have been either *real* or *spurious*. If *real*, they were a mighty engine of success; but then the

divine interposition is confessed, and the point in dispute given up. But if these miracles were mere *pretensions* and *frauds*, then they could not have promoted success, but would have resulted in detection, exposure, and defeat.

Mr. Gibbon's *fourth* cause—"the virtues of the primitive Christians"—the whole world must admit to have been very efficacious in effecting the great success of Christianity; but it is truly astonishing that a mind like that of Mr. Gibbon could conceive of those divinely-imparted virtues as a mere natural or secondary cause! Those sublime virtues could only have resulted from the truth, excellency, and divine authentication of the doctrines of Christianity.

The *fifth* cause is, "The union and discipline of the Christian republic." Here we see an exhibition of the fact that great minds are often shorn of their strength when they assault the claims of divine revelation. Mr. Gibbon is to account for the *rapid growth* of the Christian Church during the first and second centuries, and he does so by attributing it to that "union and discipline" which, according to his own showing, were for three centuries *gradually* forming the Church into a state! How can that "formation," which was *gradually* completed in the third century, produce the success of Christianity in the first and second centuries?

In conclusion, it may be proper for us to refer to the fact, that infidelity has attempted to neutralize the force of the Christian argument, founded on the *success* of the gospel, by appealing to the fact that Mohammed had great success in the establishment of a *false* religion; hence it is argued that the success of Christianity can be no evidence of its truth. The truth of Christianity is argued from its success, on the ground that there were certain *circumstances* connected with its origin and establishment which would have rendered its success a moral impossibility unless it had been true. Now it is clear that the *success* of Mohammedanism can only bear against the Christian argument here predicated, provided it was accompanied by *similar circumstances*. It is very plain that the circumstances connected with the establishment of the two religions were quite dissimilar in character. Mohammed claimed to perform no miracles—Jesus Christ performed *many*, of the most *obvious character*, and in the *most public manner*. Had Mohammed undertaken *as many* of the *same character*, under circumstances of *similar publicity*, it is impossible that he could have succeeded, even with the ignorant Arabs; but Jesus Christ confounded the combined wisdom of Jews and Gentiles. Mohammed accommodated his precepts to the wicked and sensual propensities of an ungodly

world, both as regards this life and the next; the teachings of Jesus Christ proclaimed a deadly warfare against all manner of sinful luxury, sensuality, lust, uncleanness, and abomination, promising no reward of sensual indulgence in the future. Mohammed made but trifling progress till he seized the sword as his instrument of propagandism, and mustered a large army of fierce warriors, presenting to his conquered foes the alternative of conversion or death; Jesus Christ announced to his disciples: "My kingdom is not of this world." "Provide neither sword nor scrip." "They that take the sword, shall perish with the sword."

The simple proclamation of the facts and doctrines of the gospel, in the spirit of meekness and love, was the means selected by the Saviour for the propagation of his religion. We might notice several other important points of contrast between the circumstances connected with the establishment of these two religions, but more would be superfluous. The causes of the success of the religion of the false prophet can only be *contrasted*—not *compared*—with those which produced the success of Christianity. The causes in the one case were "earthly, sensual, and devilish;" in the other case they were "pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, and full of mercy and good fruits." While Mohammed's success proves his religion to be of this earth, that of Christianity demonstrates the divinity of its origin.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XVII.

Question 1. In what two ways may the truth of Christianity be proved from its success?

2. What scriptures show that this success had been predicted?
3. What is our first source of argument to prove this success?
4. What is the next testimony on the subject?
5. What quotations are made from Christian writers?
6. What from profane writers?
7. When did Christianity become the religion of the Roman Empire?
8. What two points are to be considered to show that this success could not have been secured but by divine aid, and what evidence bears satisfactorily upon the subject?
9. How is the strength of the opposition to Christianity shown?
10. What were the inducements held forth by Jesus and his apostles to enlist disciples?
11. What the character of the precepts and promises of Christianity?
12. How does Gibbon attempt to account for the success of Christianity on natural principles?
13. How is the fallacy of his argument shown?
14. How is the success of Christianity contrasted with that of Mohammedanism?

PART II.—EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK III.—DIRECT EVIDENCE—INTERNAL.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HARMONY OF THE DISPENSATIONS—GENERAL CONSISTENCY OF THE BIBLE—ITS ANALOGY WITH NATURE.

UNDER the division of *Internal* Evidences of Christianity, according to our definitions, we include "all that evidence which is derived from *the nature of the doctrines, the consistency and character of the writers,* and *the effects of Christianity.* Or more at large—under this division, we embrace the evidence derived from the *consistency* of the different parts of the Bible, the *excellency of its doctrines;* their *accordance with human nature,* their *transforming influence upon the heart and life;* and the *internal assurance of their truth,* which they, through the Spirit, impart to all who believe and obey them."

In strictness of speech, none of the evidences of Christianity are either wholly *external* or wholly *internal;* for whether we speak of *miracles* which are always classed with the *external* evidences, or of doctrines which are always considered internal evidences, we are compelled to bring the materials of our argument partly from within and partly from *without* the Scriptures. Thus we find the *miracles* recorded *within* the Bible, and the evidence substantiating them, is derived partly from the Bible and partly from other sources; but as miracles do not properly enter into the *subject-matter* of the revelation, but merely serve as outside testimony, confirming what is revealed, they are considered *external* evidences; and although we find the *doctrines* of revelation *recorded in the Scriptures,* yet, to exhibit our argument deduced from them, we are compelled to appeal to various facts and *data,* derived

from consciousness, experience, observation, and various other *ex-scriptural* sources; but as the argument is grounded upon the doctrines revealed *in the Scriptures*, this argument is considered *internal*.

The standard Christian authors differ greatly as to the relative importance of the *external* and *internal* evidences of Christianity. Dr. S Clarke, Erskine, Soame Jenyns, and others, give to the *internal* evidences the *first* importance, and would make the *external* evidence stand in abeyance till the *internal* has been examined, and has cleared the way for the *external*. Other authors of equal eminence and ability place the *external* evidence foremost, both in order and importance. In this class of writers we find Chapman, Richard Watson, Alexander, and many others. On this question, Chapman speaks as follows:

"Were a teacher sent from heaven, with signs and wonders, to a nation of idolaters, and they previously instructed to regard no miracles of his whatsoever, till they were fully satisfied of the *goodness* of his doctrines, it is easy to foresee by what rule they would prove his doctrine, and what success he would meet with amongst them. Add to this, what is likewise exceedingly material, the great delays and perplexities attending this way of proceeding. For if every article of doctrine must be discussed and scanned by every person to whom it is offered, what slow advances would be made by a divine revelation among such a people! Hundreds would probably be cut off before they came to the end of their queries, and the prophet might grow decrepit with age before he gained twenty proselytes in a nation."

Dr. Chalmers seems evidently to have changed his ground upon this question. At one time he spoke of the internal evidence as "not capable of being so treated as to produce conviction in the minds of philosophical infidels, and as opening a door to their most specious objections to Christianity."

At a subsequent period, this same able author, writing on this subject, after having admitted that he had experienced a modification of his former views, expresses himself thus: "Instead of holding all religion as suspended on the miraculous evidence, we see this evidence itself standing at the bar of an anterior principle, and there waiting for its authentication. There is a previous natural religion on whose aid we call for a determination of this matter."

It is a little strange that a mind so well stored and capacious should be found, in the brief space of a few years, occupying opposing extreme positions on this question—*first* deeming the *internal* evidence as *unsatisfactory*, and its employment, at least, of questionable propriety; and *next* exalting it to a position *anterior* and *superior* to that

of the *external* evidence—but it is often true that the most noble and lofty geniuses, impelled by their native extraordinary momentum, fail to poise upon the golden medium-point of sober truth. We consider both external and internal evidence important and satisfactory, each in its respective sphere. The external evidence is the pioneer, clearing the way and leading the inquirer to the contemplation of the strong foundations of the Christian edifice, or it constitutes the outward "towers and bulwarks" of its defense; the internal evidence is the settled occupant of the structure, who conducts us to the interior halls and magnificent apartments, or it answers to the connecting timbers and cementing walls, holding together as one grand united building al. the essential parts, exhibiting the inner strength, utility, and beauty, and binding the whole with immovable stability upon its solid foundations, within its impregnable bulwarks. In the primal authentication of Christianity, the external evidence was essential to arrest the attention and carry instant conviction to the minds of both the philosophical skeptics and the common people, and it is still essential to command the homage and convince the judgment of the learned, as well as to confirm the faith of all; but the internal evidence, while it is less adapted to the awakening of the attention and to the convincing of the more philosophical and skeptical, gains a more direct and easy access to the conscience and heart of the uneducated masses, exercising over them a more general and powerful influence. Indeed, this evidence, when brought to its consummation in the matured experience of the enlightened Christian, though he may not be able to present it so forcibly to the conviction of others, yet to his own mind it furnishes the highest and most convincing order of testimony in favor of the truth and reality of religion, for it is the direct inspoken witness of God to the soul. Hence we conclude that, while both external and internal evidence are important, each in its peculiar sphere, they both are alike deserving of our careful consideration; and we should not concern ourselves as to which shall be assigned the superiority.

The internal evidence of Christianity opens for exploration a field of almost boundless extent. It presents to our view the entire volume of revelation, scarce a single paragraph of which can be selected that does not furnish evidence more or less direct of the divinity of its origin. And this class of evidence is scarcely less limited in diversity than in extent. Whatever is found within the lids of the Bible bearing the impress of God, whether it relates to the harmony and consistency of its parts, the character and importance of its facts, the excellency and sublimity of its doctrines, the reasonableness and purity of its precepts

or the style and honesty of its writers, furnishes ground for an argument under the head of *internal* evidence of Christianity.

Over an area so vast and varied, it is not to be expected or required that any two authors should travel in precisely the same path. While some will be impressed with one particular class of these evidences, others will be more attracted by the beauty and force of another class; and thus each separate author, following the bent of his own mind, will bring forward something hitherto unnoticed to swell the amount of this ever-accumulating store of internal evidence.

I. The first particular ground of argument in this department to which we invite attention is, *the mutual connection and dependency binding together as one united whole the Old and the New Testaments and the Mosaic and the Christian dispensations.*

We think it a position almost incontrovertible, that the two Testaments and two dispensations stand or fall together. They hang in connection as essential kindred parts of an indivisible whole, and, as one has said, "like the two cherubs, look steadfastly toward each other, and toward the mercy-seat which they encompass." As the wonderful adaptation of the different parts to each other pervading the works of nature so attests the skill and wisdom of their Author as to demonstrate his unity and divinity, even so the harmony pervading the parts of the two Testaments and two dispensations, and the perfect adaptation of the parts of the one to those of the other, exhibit the clearest evidence that the same Being is the Author of both, and that he must be possessed of the attributes of divinity. The glove is not more evidently adapted to the hand, nor the eye to the rays of the light, nor the veins and arteries to the conveyance of the blood, nor the lungs to the process of breathing, than are the teachings of the New Testament and the different parts of the gospel of Christ to those of the Old Testament and the Mosaic law. We view it as indubitable, that no unbiased, intelligent person, can carefully peruse the Old and the New Testaments, and not rise up from that perusal thoroughly convinced that *both are true*, or *both are false.*

Having established, in former chapters, the genuineness and authenticity of these Scriptures, we will not here repeat the arguments there set forth, but proceed upon the admission that the facts of the Bible are faithfully given as they transpired. What, then, we ask, can be plainer than that the two Testaments and the two dispensations mutually prove each other?

The testimony of Christ to the truth and authority of the Old Testament is direct and unequivocal. His language is: "Search the *Scrip-*

tures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." John v. 39. "Did ye never read in the *Scriptures,* The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner." Matt. xxi. 42. "Ye do err, not knowing the *Scriptures.*" Matt. xxii. 29. "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the *Scriptures.*" Luke xxiv. 45.

In these passages our Saviour gives his most unqualified testimony to the divine authority of the Scriptures of the Old Testament; hence, if the divinity of his mission and of the New Testament be admitted, that of the Old Testament necessarily follows.

Equally conclusive is his testimony to the divine legation of Moses: "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me." John v. 46. "And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me." Luke xxiv. 44. Again, it is written: "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in *all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself." Luke xxiv. 25–27. "And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the *Scriptures.*" Luke xxiv. 32. To Peter, in the garden of Gethsemane, he said: "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the *Scriptures be fulfilled,* that thus it must be?" Matt. xxvi. 53, 54. In his dispute with the Jews, the Saviour spoke as follows: "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the *Scripture cannot be broken,*" etc. John x. 34, 35.

With this testimony of the Saviour that of his apostles perfectly corresponds. They are constantly quoting the Scriptures of the Old Testament, always referring to them as the infallible word of God. Paul to Timothy uses the following language: "From a child thou hast known the *holy Scriptures,* which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All *Scripture* is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16. Peter speaks of the writings of St. Paul, connecting them with the Scriptures of the Old Testament, thus: "Which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the *other Scriptures,* unto their own de-

struction." 2 Peter iii. 16. Again, the same apostle declares: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter i. 21. The same apostle again says: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter i. 10, 11. In the Epistle to the Hebrews are recorded these words: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

From all these scriptures it is manifest that Christ and his apostles, in the most direct and emphatic manner, recognized as of divine authority the Old Testament Scriptures and the legation of Moses. Hence it is here fully proved, that if the New Testament is the word of God, so is the Old; and if the mission of Christ was divine, so was that of Moses.

The next point is, to show in what manner the Old Testament sanctions and receives its fulfillment in the New. The entire Mosaic economy was evidently designed as a temporary institution. Moses himself, and all the Jewish prophets after him, spoke of a "Prophet whom God should raise up, like unto Moses"—of a Deliverer, Shiloh, Messiah, or King, who was to sit on the throne of David, and reign prosperously over both Jews and Gentiles. Pointing to this Ruler and his kingdom were innumerable types, ceremonials, and services, which, considered in themselves alone, were unmeaning, useless, and burdensome, but, viewed as receiving their fulfillment in Christ, were remarkably significant, sublimely illustrative of a most beneficent and enduring institution, and graciously communicative of richest blessings.

This Mosaic economy was a complete and homogeneous system, the various parts of which had a manifest connection with and dependence upon each other. It was no senseless aggregation of disjointed and incongruous elements—of rites and ceremonies, of altars and sacrifices, of priests and services, of laws and formulas—without affinity or mutual assimilation, but every thing bore the signature of being part and parcel of the same great connected whole. Could a system thus harmoniously arranged and symmetrically connected, and, moreover, so typically adumbrative of a new dispensation by which, after a lapse of centuries, it was to be superseded, be a fictitious, human contrivance?

How can we account for the origin of the sacrificial institution, and the constant and appropriate reference thereby kept up and running through the entire Mosaic economy to the sinful character of man, and the great doctrine of vicarious atonement, and especially for the complete conformity of the whole to the gospel plan of redemption by the death of Christ, except upon the supposition that God was the author of both systems? Could human skill and foresight have devised such an extended system of types and shadows extending throughout centuries, and brought about so exact and marvelous a fulfillment in every particular? The supposition is utterly incredible! The Mosaic institution, considered in itself—in the wisdom of its precepts, the sublimity of its doctrines, the simplicity, purity, and grandeur of its ritual, and its harmonious consistency throughout—so far transcends all pagan religions and the proudest efforts of human genius in all ages, as to impress every impartial examiner with the fact, that it was not "of men," but "from heaven." But when we look at its exact and wonderful fulfillment in the gospel, the evidence of its divine origin is overwhelming!

If the typical and ceremonial institution of Moses was the invention of men, it was an exhibition of madness and folly, combined with system and skill, perfectly irreconcilable with each other—of madness and folly, that a religious ceremonial so expensive and onerous should be voluntarily assumed or imposed upon any people, for no assignable reason whatever; of system and skill, that an institution so extensive and varied in its range and application should yet be so harmoniously cemented as one connected system, and so perfectly fitted in type and shadow to "better things to come." The only rational conclusion on the subject is, that God was the author of both the law and the gospel, and that the one was the substance of which the other was the shadow.

In all the numerous types and shadows connected with the Old Dispensation, and pointing to the "good things to come," there is not one that does not find its antitype, substance, or accomplishment, in the gospel of Jesus. We look upon the paschal lamb, whose blood availed to the deliverance of the Israelites from the destroying angel, and we think of "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." We look upon the brazen serpent lifted up in the wilderness by the hand of Moses for the healing of the bitten Israelites, and we think of the Son of God hanging on the cross, that all the world may look to him and live. We read of the Jewish temple, with its outer and inner courts, its altars and its sacrifices, with its "golden censer, and the ark

of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant, and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat"—we look upon the priests, with their vestments, their robes, and their incense—in a word, we look upon all the services of that extended ritual, and we ask for the explanation of the whole system; but this explanation is to be found in the gospel of Christ, and nowhere else. Can it be that this wonderful harmony and mutual adaptation to each other of these two systems is the result of mere chance? Has it been produced by human contrivance? The supposition involves a moral impossibility. Between the two Testaments and the two dispensations there is an all-pervading and ever-present unity of design, extending through all the centuries of their history, impressing upon both the same signature, and assigning to each the same divine origin.

II. We look next at *the perfect consistency of all the parts of the Bible with each other*, as an evidence of the divinity of its origin. This volume is not the production of one individual author, nor of one particular age of the world; but it was written by as many as thirty or forty different authors, living in distant periods of time, extending through a space of sixteen hundred years. That so many writers thus distantly severed from each other, precluding the possibility of consultation or collusion, should write even a small treatise upon any one subject, and yet preserve a perfect consistency in all their statements and views, would be a phenomenon in itself truly marvelous, and such as has never been exhibited in all the human productions of the world. But how must this marvel be increased in reference to the Bible, when we reflect on the extent of the volume, the wide range and great diversity of subjects embraced, the variety exhibited by these authors—in character, in education, in customs, in country, in taste, in talent, in pursuit, and in condition in life!

In this volume is embraced, with a greater or less degree of prominence, a vast range of topics—history, biography, agriculture, manufactures, government, politics, trade, commerce, architecture, navigation, letters, music, poetry, travels, geography, philosophy, morals, religion. *These* topics are all either particularly treated of in the Bible, or incidentally alluded to, with more or less distinctness.

We find, also, great diversity in the character and circumstances of the sacred writers. They were taken from nearly all the walks of life, from the highest to the lowest. Kings, priests, prophets, statesmen, judges, physicians, shepherds, husbandmen, herdsmen, mechanics, fishermen, and gatherers of sycamore-fruit—some from all these depart-

ments have contributed, each his portion, to the composition of the Bible. When, therefore, we look at the wide range and great diversity of subjects embraced, and the number and variety of character, pursuit, taste, and condition of the writers—when we take all these facts into the account, we demand if the perfect agreement and consistency so manifestly preserved throughout the volume, is not satisfactory evidence that it is the product of no merely human effort?

Human productions, on whatever subject, are ever changing and passing away. One authority rises and flourishes to-day; to-morrow it is superseded by another, and sinks into oblivion. The text-books of one age are not those of the next. In the progress of knowledge, it has been discovered that they contain important errors; hence they are thrown aside and more approved standards are adopted, only, in their turn, to share a similar fate. No two merely human authors, unless they were mere copyists, have ever written books upon the same subject without contradicting each other, and few have written *much* without contradicting themselves. What two authors on grammar, geography, rhetoric, mathematics, history of the same country and period, agriculture, politics, ethics, or religion, have not disagreed—and most of them, again and again, come in direct conflict with each other? We may challenge the infidel world to name them. Indeed, unless, as already stated, they be mere copyists, or be in collusion, such an occurrence is, in the nature of things, impossible. But within the lids of the Bible, though infidelity has exerted her utmost ingenuity and strength for thousands of years, she has never been able to identify the first real contradiction! Objections without reason, and cavils without sense, she has brought forth by the legion. She has even shouted over a *seeming* contradiction, as though she had discovered a panacea for "all the ills that flesh is heir to;" but this exultation has ever been shown to have been premature. A few beams of sound criticism have soon dispelled the clouds of ignorance on which the supposed contradiction was dependent for its existence; and clearly demonstrated that the contradiction existed in the ignorance of man, and not in the word of God!

In all the references to history, whether of the Jews or of pagan nations; in all the numerous statements bearing upon the geography of countries, or the manners and customs of nations; in all the reference to the political *status* of empires, kingdoms, and provinces; in all the incidental allusions to agriculture, science, philosophy, or the arts; in all the representations of the character, morals, and religion of numerous nations in different ages—in every and all of these things, as

embraced in the Bible, that wonderful volume stands forth unimpeachable, defying an infidel world to convict its pages of the first real contradiction or error! Can such a book be of human origin? Is it a property of human productions to be thus perfect? Let honest reason decide the question.

III. Another ground of argument on this subject is, *the consistency of the administration of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, with what we learn of his ways, as exhibited in his works.*

Nothing is more common with infidels, than to aver that the administration of God, as revealed in the Bible, is inconsistent with what we learn of him from his works around us. Thus they endeavor to set the God of nature and the God of revelation at variance; and assuming (which none can dispute) that nature must be *true*, they proceed to infer that revelation must be *false*. Christianity, on the other hand, strenuously contends that such is the perfect harmony and consistency of the ways of God, as revealed in the Bible, with what we know of his administration, as seen in the works of nature and of providence, that it follows, as a necessary inference, that the God of nature and of providence must also be the God of revelation.

For the illustration of the Christian argument derived from this source, we will select only a few of the obvious points of analogy between nature and revelation; but they shall be those points which infidelity has seemed most delighted to use in her favor.

First, *the principle of progression* developed in divine revelation has been made a ground of complaint by the infidel. Why is it, we are asked, that, if the Bible be of God a complete revelation of Christianity, the perfected dispensation of religion was not given to the world at once, and not the circuitous route adopted of keeping mankind for four thousand years under the comparative darkness and bondage of the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations? And why is it, that when God constitutes a person a Christian, he must be first a babe and then a young man ere he can attain to maturity in Christian character? Is this consistent, it is urged, with the character we learn of God from his works? If God is infinite in goodness and power, can he adopt unnecessary delay in bestowing upon his creatures the blessings he sees they so much need?

In reply to these objections, we confidently appeal to the analogy between nature and revelation. We think this will not only be sufficient to silence the cavil of the skeptic, but that it will furnish a very powerful internal evidence of the truth of revelation.

We ask, then, Is not this same principle of *progression* abundantly

exemplified in nature? We see it in vegetation: There is "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." We see it in our own species: We pass through the several stages of infancy, childhood, and youth, up to manhood and old age. We witness it in all educational developments: The child just inducted into school does not enter at once upon the study of the higher branches, but he begins with the alphabet, and gradually advances from one stage to the next in the ascending scale. Now, the infidel will not deny that God, had he seen proper so to order it, could just as easily have dispensed with this progressive order in nature. But such was not his plan. God formed the laws of nature after the counsel of infinite wisdom. Had he spoken the word he could with equal facility have so ordered it that the seed sown by the husbandman should mature into a ripe crop in a few hours, so that he might sow in the morning and reap in the afternoon of the same day. Let the skeptic first go and settle his quarrel with the God of nature, and then his cavils at revelation will be less inconsistent!

This progressive principle in revelation only shows that the God of nature and the God of the Bible work by the same rule; in other words, it evinces that revelation is confirmed by nature. When the world was in its infancy, God imparted to it, in the patriarchal dispensation, the alphabet of religion. When that was sufficiently matured, the Mosaic economy was unfolded; and when "the fulness of time was come," and all things in the best possible state of preparation for it, the full development of the gospel was made. In this succession of dispensations, and in their harmonious adaptation to each other, and to the condition of the world, there is a manifestation of wisdom and foresight transcending the utmost powers of mere humanity, and demonstrating the divine origin of the whole scheme.

Between the great foundation principles of nature and revelation, there is manifest a perfect analogy and harmony, from which may be deduced a very forcible argument in favor of the truth of revelation. The points of the analogy in question are very numerous, and have furnished material for that inimitable volume, Butler's Analogy. But we propose to call attention only to one or two leading positions:

1. First, *in both nature and revelation, the great foundation principles are too profoundly mysterious for the comprehension of human wisdom.*

The mysteries of revelation have a thousand times been paraded, magnified, and ridiculed by skeptics. And although it has been as often shown that similar objections might with equal propriety be urged against nature, yet infidelity seems determined never to remember the

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fact. The mysteries of the Bible have furnished the theme for many a sneering sarcasm; and perhaps will still continue to do so, so long as ridicule, instead of reason, shall continue to be the favorite weapon of infidelity. But we proceed to the consideration of the basis of our argument as stated above.

We first call attention to some of the leading foundation principles connected with revelation, and will show that they are profoundly mysterious, and, to finite minds, truly incomprehensible. In turning our attention to the great subject-matter of revelation, the first leading important doctrine presenting itself to our view, and challenging our faith, is the *being and perfections of God.* Here, at the very threshold of the great temple of revealed truth, we are called to the contemplation of a theme which is probably as overwhelmingly mysterious to angelic as it certainly is to human intellects. For what finite mind can comprehend the infinite God? Our utmost capacity can only grasp with a feeble hand something of what he has been pleased to reveal concerning his attributes; but of the essential nature of that high and lofty One, we can know nothing. His essence is deeply enshrined in mystery, beyond the reach of finite minds.

Another great foundation-truth of revelation is the *divinity of Christ.* No doctrine of the Bible is more clearly revealed, or occupies a more important position in the system of divinity, than this. That Christ is *God* and that he is *man,* the Bible declares most explicitly; and our faith must bow submissively, and embrace the revealed fact. But what mind can comprehend this stupendous mystery? The *atonement,* the *influence of the Spirit,* the *regeneration* and *sanctification* of the soul—all these are also great essential doctrines of revelation; yet in each one of them, what a world of impenetrable mystery is embraced! The fact, then, is freely admitted, that revelation contains profound and inexplicable mysteries. It is quite probable that, pertaining to the glorious doctrines revealed in the Bible, there are depths, and heights, and lengths, and breadths of sublime mysteries never yet explored by men or angels. And while the endless cycles of eternity shall endure, these may furnish richest themes of contemplation for the multitudes who stand before the throne. But for these mysteries of revelation, one of the important evidences that God is its author would be lacking—for surely a revelation which finite minds can thoroughly comprehend would be destitute of one important mark of its having emanated from the great and incomprehensible One.

But when we turn our thoughts to the great foundation principles in connection with the science of nature, we find a most striking *analogy*

to the mysteries of revelation. To maintain consistency with himself, the infidel should reject and refuse to believe in nature, until he can penetrate the profoundest depths of all her wonderful mysteries. But will he do so? What can he thoroughly comprehend of the *essence* of all material things? He cannot master the essence of an atom in matter, and yet he would spurn revelation from his faith on account of her mysteries.

To begin at the foundation principles in nature, what can the wisest philosopher tell us of the *essence* of matter? can he thoroughly analyze and define it? He may lecture upon its *properties*, but he can no more comprehend its *essence* than he can create a world.

Again, look at the great principle in nature called *attraction*, or the *law of gravitation*. What is it? Who can comprehend or define it? We witness the constant evidence of the *fact*. We see the sun from his throne, in the center of his system, as philosophy and astronomy tell us, grasping the planets with his golden chain of attraction, and whirling them in their orbits with such marvelous exactitude that they shall not deviate from their prescribed pathway the breadth of a hair in a million of ages. But we pause and inquire, What is this attraction? Can philosophy answer? Can the wisdom of the schools solve the problem? All they can tell us is, that it is a *power*, an *influence*, a *something*, they know not what; and, for want of a better name, they call it *attraction*. But to comprehend what this attraction is, is beyond the capacity of Sir Isaac Newton and all his disciples. They are as ignorant on this point as the most unlettered peasant. They know it is the power of Him who placed the sun in the firmament, and hung the earth upon nothing, but proud reason can go no farther. Here then is mystery in nature, profound and overwhelming. Let boasting infidelity explain this stupendous mystery in nature—till *then*, let her not scoff at the mysteries of revelation.

Another great foundation-stone in the temple of nature is the principle of *life*. The fact that this principle exists is obvious to our senses. We are familiar with its phenomena in both the vegetable and animal kingdoms. The germinating seed, the growing grass, the bursting bud, and the unfolding leaf, no less than the blush of health in the face and the power of action in the body of man, testify to the fact that the principle of life exists. But what is it? Who can penetrate its essence? Physiology may discourse of the germinating principle in vegetation, of the warming sun and the refreshing rain, and of the fructifying properties of soils; but what are they without the living principle in the seed? And this living principle none can analyze, define, or com-

prehend. And who has ever explained the principle of life in man? There is something within us that opens the senses to the wonders of the world about us, that paints the cheek and kindles the eye, that touches the muscle and moves the limb; but what is that something? The profoundest philosopher is as ignorant as the child. We may read that "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul," but we can go no farther. Beyond this Bible revealment natural science is dumb. The *essence* of life is still an inscrutable mystery.

Look also at the mystery connected with the *circulation of the blood.* Since its discovery by Mr. Harvey, the fact has been obvious to all. But although we have had many learned lectures on the subject, this mystery in nature has never been explained. We have been told that it is the contraction and dilatation of the heart which propels the blood in one continuous current through the arteries to all parts of the body, whence it is taken up by the absorbents, and returned through the veins to the heart. But still the mystery in the process is unexplained. What causes the heart to contract and dilate? Here, at the very commencement, all the skill of philosophy is baffled—for the contraction and dilatation of the heart, on mere natural principles, must ever remain an inexplicable mystery. It is the power of God that, sitting at the seat of life, prevents the golden bowl from being broken, or the pitcher from being broken at the fountain. But *how* this is effected no one can tell. The *fact* is plain, the *manner* of the fact involves the mystery. Volumes might be written in pointing out the great mysteries of nature, at none of which does the faith of the infidel ever stagger, but at Bible mysteries he is ever ready to scoff.

But that the mysteries in Scripture are so frequently urged by skeptics as objections to Christianity, we would have said less than we have upon the subject. We, however, present one farther example of the mysteries of nature. We refer to the wonders of *instinct* as seen in the department of irrational creation. Not to speak of the elephant, the dog, the fox, and others of the class, we notice this marvelous power in that small but useful insect, the honey-bee. With a skill surpassing that of all the chemists in the world, it collects its luscious store from every appropriate flower of the fields and the woods; and with a mathematical exactitude and mechanical ingenuity which no human ability can equal, it collects its materials and constructs its cells Now, we ask, who can explain this phenomenon? This little chemist and mechanist never studied science, never was at school; and yet, by mere instinct, it exhibits a skill and ingenuity not susceptible of improvement.

And, to add to the marvel, this wonderful little chemist and mechanist has made no advancement through the lapse of centuries; but, precisely as we witness now, it collected its sweets and constructed its store-houses amid the bowers of Eden. Is not this a mystery in nature?

Thus we see that in both nature and revelation the great foundation principles embody incomprehensible mysteries, exhibiting in this the most perfect analogy. From this fact, the necessary conclusion should be that, if we embrace in our faith, without reserve, the entire system of nature, notwithstanding the mysteries it involves, we cannot without manifest inconsistency reject from our faith the system of revelation, because of the mysteries it may embrace. In reference to both systems, the mysteries lie not in the *facts* but in the *manner* of the facts. We may believe the *facts* though the *manner* of those facts be beyond our comprehension. Had revelation come to us free from all mystery, the same captious infidelity that now sneers at the sublime mysteries of the Bible would, doubtless, still deride and reject Christianity on the ground that it was destitute of sublime mysteries such as are recorded in the volume of nature. But the Christian philosopher, as he peruses these two great volumes, and marks the striking analogy between them, seeing upon both the same signature, may exult in the evidence thus derived that the same God who made the world is the author of his Bible.

2. In both nature and revelation, though we find much that is mysterious, yet we need not be experimentally or practically much the losers on that account—for those mysteries do not pertain to such things as are essential to our happiness either here or hereafter. They are what may be studied or let alone, as we choose, without any serious detriment.

It is a very impressive point of analogy between the two systems, and strongly demonstrative of the truth of revelation, that, *both in reference to the temporal things of this life and the spiritual things of the next, both in nature and revelation, all that is most valuable or essential to our welfare is easy to be understood, and is readily accessible to all classes.*

A few illustrations will render this point of analogy clear and evident. First, look at the temporal blessings of life connected with nature. What is more essential to the welfare of all sentient living things than the surrounding atmosphere? Without it, man would immediately perish from the earth; without it, beast and bird, and tree and plant, would droop and die. Yet, in this department, how abundant the provisions of a merciful Providence! The globe is encircled, forty miles high, with a volume of this life-preserving fluid.

How essential to our welfare is the great staple article of *water*, and how abundant the supply! The oceans, the rivers, the creeks, the little branches, the springs, and even the floating clouds, are all employed as ministering servants to furnish and convey to man, and beast, and bird, and tree, and shrub, and plant, and to all that has life, an abundant supply of this invaluable commodity.

But if we look at revelation we find its pages stamped with this same impressive evidence of having proceeded from God. What are the mysterious matters and things "hard to be understood" in the Bible? Are *they* the great doctrines and precepts connected directly with the salvation of the soul? *These* are all so plain that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein." In order to our salvation, we need not puzzle over the import of mysterious and yet unfulfilled prophecies, or the abstruse and knotty questions in theology. Repentance and faith, which can be understood as easily by the uneducated as by the learned, are the only absolute conditions on which salvation is proffered. With these terms all may comply. And thus the provision of saving mercy in the gospel is rendered as free, as full, and as abundant as the air we breathe, or the water we drink from the provisions of nature; and so this great point of analogy is fully carried out between nature and revelation, giving strong reason for believing that the two systems have emanated from the same divine Source.

IV. We conclude this chapter by noticing the analogy between revelation and some remarkable dispensations of *Divine Providence.*

It has been argued that the Bible cannot be a revelation from God, because it represents God as authorizing the extermination of the Canaanites, which would have been a cruelty, inconsistent with the divine character.

In reply to this, it is enough to state that the destruction of the Canaanites, as commanded in Scripture, is perfectly consistent with those dispensations of Providence by which many thousands are sometimes destroyed by an earthquake or volcano. In both cases, the responsibility of the destruction is with God. If the God of providence, consistently with his attributes, could destroy by *the agency of a volcano* the inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum, the God of the Bible, with equal consistency, may destroy the Canaanites by *the agency of the Israelites.* The *agency* or *instrumentality* by which the work is performed cannot change its moral character. The infidel admits that God, by his providence, destroys multitudes by *earthquakes* and *volcanoes*, but, inconsistently with himself, denies that he may do the same thing through *the agency of a nation.*

The Canaanites were judicially cut off for their sins, because "the cup of their iniquity was full." The Judge of all had the right thus to execute upon them the sentence, which, by their long-continued wickedness, they deserved. And if God may punish them thus severely for their sins, he may select the *agency* for the execution of the sentence. In this case, we see the harmony between revelation and providence, tending to evince that the God of providence is also the God of the Bible. We see farther that Christianity is perfectly consistent with nature and with providence, while infidelity is inconsistent with both the one and the other, and equally so with herself. Let her first go and be reconciled with nature and with providence, and then her quarrel with revelation will be ended.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XVIII.

QUESTION 1. What is included under the head of *internal* evidence?

2. Do our standard authors agree as to the relative importance of *external* and *internal* evidence?

3. What is the position of Dr. Chalmers on the subject?

4. What relation do these classes of evidence sustain to each other?

5. Which is the more convincing of the two to the Christians?

6. Is the range of internal evidence limited, or extended?

7. What is the first evidence of this kind noticed?

8. What testimony did the Saviour give to the truth of the Old Testament?

9. What was the testimony of the apostles on the subject?

10. How may it be shown that the Old Testament sanctions the New, and receives therein its fulfillment?

11. How is an argument founded on the consistency of the different parts of the Bible with each other?

12. Does the Bible contain any *real* contradictions?

13. How is it shown that the God of the Bible is consistent with the God of nature?

14. To what points of analogy is the appeal made?

15. What departments in both nature and revelation are mysterious, and what are plain?

16. What objections have been urged founded upon the dispensations of Divine Providence, and how have they been answered?

CHAPTER XIX.

ORIGIN OF THE BIBLE — LIFE OF CHRIST — STYLE OF THE SACRED WRITERS — ADAPTATION OF DOCTRINES TO THE CHARACTER AND CONDITION OF MAN.

I. As those skilled and practiced in such things can judge of the qualifications of a mechanist or of an artist by examining his production, whether it be a machine that he has constructed or a piece of statuary or of painting that he has executed, so we form a judgment of the character of an author from the perusal of a book he has written; and although this judgment is not in strictness the result of mathematical demonstration, yet it often conveys quite as satisfactory conviction to the mind. For example, who can read the Iliad of Homer, the Principia of Newton, or the Orations of Demosthenes, and not be convinced that the first was a poet, the second a philosopher, and the third an orator? It is on a precisely similar principle that we conduct the internal argument for Christianity. The book called the Bible has found its way into our world. Men have differed in their judgment as to its origin, character, and importance; and one mode of determining this question is, by examining the volume itself. The evidence derived from this source is called *internal*, and, to the candid and unsophisticated mind, is often of the most convincing character; though skeptics are seldom disposed to give it an impartial hearing.

There are but *three* different classes of men from whom the Bible could have emanated: it was either written by *good, inspired* men, by *good, uninspired* men, or by *bad* men.

The examination of the volume itself may easily satisfy the impartial as to which of these classes of men were its authors. Bad men *could* not if they *would*, and *would* not if they *could*, have written such a book. As well might "the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots," as for *wicked, unholy, bad* men, to write such a volume as the Bible! It is a moral impossibility. A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet water, nor can an evil tree bring forth good fruit. Had a set of bad men, in any given age, combined for the express purpose,

their groveling, polluted intellects never could have conceived the pure and lofty sentiments which everywhere breathe through the Scriptures, much less could they have maintained the same unearthly and holy characteristics throughout so extended and diversified a production. How, then, can we conceive it possible that thirty or forty base and atrociously wicked men, living in different ages and parts of the world, extending through a period of sixteen hundred years, and having no knowledge of each other, or possible chance of collusion, could have thus combined for such a deception, and maintained throughout so marvelous a consistency? He who *can* believe *this*, exhibits a larger capacity of belief than if he were to subscribe to every miracle of the Bible at which infidelity has ever scoffed! When a set of deceitful hypocrites and perjured wretches—as the authors of the Bible must have been, *if they were bad men at all*—can produce such a volume under the circumstances, then a mere child or idiot may have written the Elements of Euclid, or the Principia of Newton! If bad men wrote the Bible, then it is a tissue of profanity and lies from beginning to end; for they profess everywhere to be God-fearing men, speaking with authority from Heaven. And, moreover, they record in deepest colors their own shame, and utter the severest denunciations against themselves! Can *this* be reconciled with the principles of human nature? Infidelity can point to nothing like it in all the history of our race. From what source soever the Bible originated, it is morally certain that it never was conceived or brought forth by *bad* men.

But could it have been the production of a set of *good* but *uninspired men?* This hypothesis is equally absurd and impossible. The writers of the Bible do not profess to speak on their own authority, or in their own name, but claimed to have received their commission from God; and, in confirmation of that claim, they performed many notable and public miracles. Now, we demand, can *good* men go before the world with a lie in their mouths? Can they preface their communication with "Thus saith the Lord," when the Lord has not spoken? Can they profess to be "moved by the Holy Ghost," when they are only moved by themselves? And would God sanction the impious falsehood and deception by empowering them to work miracles in its confirmation? That the Bible was produced by *good* but *uninspired* men is an absurdity—an utter impossibility! Hence, as neither *bad* men nor *good uninspired* men could have produced it, there is but one other source for its origin left—it must have been produced—if ever produced at all—by *good inspired* men. If infidelity admits this conclusion, she yields the whole question, and subscribes to divine revelation; if she denies it,

she may with equal reason deny that the Bible exists, and set her sophistry at work to show that the millions of mankind, through all these long centuries, while they imagined they were reading the book called the Bible, were all the while in a dream! Infidelity may sneer at the conclusion presented, but she cannot escape from it, except by proving that the Bible was either the production of *bad* men, or of *good* but *uninspired* men; and when she shall have accomplished *this*, to prove that there never was a Bible in the world, or that light and darkness are the same, will be but an easy task for her masterly logic!

II. A very powerful internal evidence of the truth of Christianity may be derived from the *character of Christ*, as portrayed in the evangelical history. We do not here include his miracles and predictions—which have been considered under the head of external evidence—but refer merely to the personal history of the man Christ Jesus. In this there is abundant testimony to satisfy every candid mind that he was no impostor, but, as he claimed to be, "a Teacher come from God."

1. First, look at the *purity of his life*. What impostor ever exhibited a deportment so blameless—a life so free from pride, ostentation, vanity, selfishness, or worldly-mindedness? Throughout his whole life goodness marks his intercourse with mankind. He engages in nothing to afflict or distress—nothing to produce discord in social circles, or insurrections in civil communities; he appears among men as the "Prince of Peace." It was the business of his life to go about doing good. Were any blind, he gave them sight; were any deaf, he restored their hearing; were any dumb, he loosed their tongues; were any lame, he said, "Arise, take up thy bed, and walk;" were any sick, he said, "Wilt thou be made whole?" were any possessed of devils, he "rebuked the foul spirit," and relieved the possessed; and "to the poor he preached the gospel." So abundant were his acts of benevolence, that multitudes of the afflicted followed him up in his travels, or cried after him as he passed, thronged him as he entered the house of a friend, pressing through the crowd to "touch the hem of his garment;" and, of all that ever came to him in distress, not one did he turn empty away. And though he was poor, not having "where to lay his head," he never received a reward for any of his acts of mercy; but, a homeless wanderer, he went about doing good to others. Can it be that a life so blameless, so devoted to doing good, so self-sacrificing, was that of an impostor?

2. But look at his *patience*, amid all his persecutions, and his kindness toward his enemies. He bears insult and injury, mockery and derision, with calm composure and meek submission. His character was aspersed, and all manner of evil spoken of him falsely. His best

acts were attributed to the worst of motives, and his virtues were converted into crimes. He was pursued from city to city with the tongue of slander, and with the venom of demons his enemies clamored for his blood; but he bore it all, without recrimination or the slightest effort to take revenge. He wept in sympathy over the devoted city of Jerusalem, and, with his dying lips, prayed for his murderers: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Are these the characteristics of an impostor? Could he who thus lived and thus died be a cunning deceiver, practicing a fraud upon the world? The very supposition is monstrous!

3. Next we view the character of Christ as a *Teacher*. And, first, we notice his Sermon on the Mount. Here, within the limits of three chapters, is comprised the most luminous presentation of moral and religious truth contained in any language. As he opened his mouth and taught, a shower of rich beatitudes came down upon his waiting hearers like clusters of ripe fruit from the tree of life! We cannot pause to analyze this inimitable sermon, but it contains every conceivable excellence—it is simple and comprehensive, majestic and sublime, tender and impressive, earnest and pathetic—it teaches the purest morality and the loftiest devotion, in the clearest and most forcible style. No unprejudiced mind can peruse it and fail to coincide with the multitudes who "were astonished at his doctrine," and testified that "he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

Again, we look at the instructions of Christ in his *parables*. Here the divinity of his character as a *teacher* conspicuously shines forth. Never before nor since did this method of teaching appear with so much beauty and force. With the profoundest skill, by the use of the parable, he riveted attention, removed difficulties, disarmed prejudice, shed light upon the understanding, convinced the conscience, and, transforming the bigot into an impartial judge, led him by gentle and imperceptible degrees to pronounce upon himself the sentence of condemnation. Do we wish to see the richness and fullness of gospel grace, the earnest importunity of the gospel call, and the fallacious pleas and senseless excuses by which sinners evade this call—do we wish to see all these things forcibly set forth?—we should read the parable of the Great Supper. Would we have a view of the sincere and benevolent intention with which the gospel should be proclaimed to all classes, and of the various kinds of hearers who listen to the word, and the reasons why so small a portion of them profit thereby?—we may read it in all its transcendent beauty and force in the parable of the Sower. Would we behold in more than nature's deepest colors, the folly and drudgery of sin, the

all-surpassing yearnings of the bowels of Infinite Love for the salvation of the wandering rebel, and the thrill of joy and gladness with which all heaven will celebrate the return to God of every penitent—would we witness a description of all this, wrought up to the loftiest degree of pathos and power that language can reach?—we have it in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

4. But we look also at the circumstances connected with the condemnation and death of Jesus, and witness *there* the evidence that he was more than man. Behold him before Pilate! Did ever a criminal display such serene composure under such circumstances? Did ever a judge pronounce such a eulogy upon him whom, with the next breath, he ordered to execution? "I find no fault in him," said Pilate; and added: "Take ye him and crucify him!" Can this be a wicked deceiver? But look upon the scene of his death—upon the robe of derision and the crown of thorns—upon the cross, the nails, and the hammer—upon the rending of the vail and the going out of the sun—upon his pierced side, and hands, and feet, and upon his streaming blood—listen to his dying groans, and to his last prayer for his enemies, and say, Was not "this the Son of God"? Could an impostor have lived such a life of purity and self-sacrifice? Could *he* have exhibited such calm serenity of soul amid such "contradiction of sinners," labored so perseveringly for the world that hated him, and died such a death of God-like composure, exhibiting to the last such compassion for his murderers? Sober reason affirms that Jesus was a good man, and not an impostor; and if so, then he was the Son of God, and his religion is *true*.

5. Even some of the bitter opponents of Christianity, in an hour of more sober reflection than usual, have uttered some noble and eloquent sentiments concerning Christ and his teachings. Rousseau says: "I will confess to you that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the gospel has its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all their pomp of diction; how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scriptures! Is it possible that a book at once so simple and sublime should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage whose history it contains should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manners; what an affecting gracefulness in his delivery; what sublimity in his maxims; what profound wisdom in his discourses; what presence of mind in his replies; how great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live and so die without weakness and without ostentation?

When Plato described his imaginary good man, with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he described exactly the character of Jesus Christ; the resemblance was so striking, that all the Christian Fathers perceived it. What prepossession, what blindness, must it be to compare the son of Sophroniscus (Socrates) to the Son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion is there between them! Socrates, dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last; and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was any thing more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others however, had before put them in practice; he had only to say, therefore, what they had done, and to reduce their example to precept. But where could Jesus learn, among his competitors, that pure and sublime morality of which he only has given us both precept and example? The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for; that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonizing pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God! Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty, without obviating it; it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality, contained in the gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable that the inventor would be a more astonishing man than the hero."

In the *apostolic writings* we find also very conclusive marks of truthfulness and candor. These disciples never pause to eulogize the transcendent virtues of their Master, or to express their admiration of his wonderful doings; they everywhere simply narrate facts as they transpired, in the plainest and most natural style, yet preserving a tone of solemn dignity suitable to the important events they record. Hannah More well says, "These sober recorders of events the most astonishing, are never carried away by the circumstances they relate into any pomp of diction, into any use of superlatives. There is not, perhaps, in the

whole Gospels a single interjection, not an exclamation, nor any artifice to call the reader's attention to the marvels of which the relaters were the witnesses. Absorbed in their holy task, no alien idea presents itself to their mind; the object before them fills it. They never digress—are never called away by the solicitations of vanity, or the suggestions of curiosity. No image starts up to divert their attention. There is, indeed, in the Gospels much imagery, much allusion, much allegory; but they proceed from their Lord, and are recorded as his. The writers never fill up the intervals between events. They leave circumstances to make their own impression, instead of helping out the reader by any reflections of their own. They always feel the holy ground on which they stand. They preserve the gravity of history and the severity of truth, without enlarging the outline or swelling the expression."

III. An argument, also, from internal evidence may be founded upon the *style* of the sacred writers. How marked is the diversity in the style of Moses, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Amos, and of all the Old Testament writers! And no one can read the New Testament and not be struck with the peculiar characteristics of style in the several authors. In the writings of Paul, what massive strength and force of logic; what ardor of devotion; what firmness of purpose; what dauntless courage! In the writings of John, what sympathetic tenderness; what sweetness and amiability! And in Peter, and James, and all the rest, there is apparent in each a style of his own. It cannot but be observed how fully the peculiar style of each author is sustained throughout all his writings. Could such consistency have been preserved by an impostor?

IV. The next source of internal evidence to which we call attention is the *doctrines* of revelation. If these be such as are worthy of God, and adapted to the *character*, the *condition*, the *necessities*, and the *hopes* of man, and such as could not have been discovered by human reason, then it will follow that they have been revealed from heaven.

We need not pause to show how vastly superior are the writings of the Scriptures, both on moral and religious subjects, to all the wisdom of the schools of pagan philosophy. The ancient Jews were less learned than the Greeks and the Romans. How, then, could the former so excel the latter, unless they were divinely assisted? Infidelity may boast of the system of natural religion; but, we demand, to what does it all amount without revelation? But for what modern infidels have purloined from the New Testament, they would have been as ignorant of the unity of God and of the divine attributes, of the duty of man and of the doctrine of immortality, as were the pagan philosophers

Were the philosophers of Greece and Rome, in the Augustan age, inferior in learning to the infidels of the present day? If not, then why were their notions on these subjects so vague and indefinite, and blended with so much uncertainty, so inferior to those of the infidels of our day? Simply because our modern infidels have borrowed from the gospel. From the divine philosophy of Jesus and the sublime ethics of his apostles they have stolen their wisdom, but refuse to acknowledge the source to which they are so much indebted. "After grazing," as one expresses it, "in the pastures of revelation, they boast of growing fat by nature." Those glorious presentations of the divine attributes, the inimitable golden rule of the Saviour, and the confident announcements of immortality, which so enrich the pages of revelation, never could have been discovered by human reason; but they are every way worthy of God, from whom they have been derived, and, when revealed, reason can attest their truth and excellence.

Were it necessary, it could easily be shown that an *internal* evidence of the truth of revelation might be deduced from every single doctrine and precept of the Bible. But we can only present a few of the prominent doctrines, and exhibit the argument founded on them as a sample of the rest.

1. The doctrine of *human depravity*, or the moral corruption of man's nature, is very clearly revealed in Scripture. It runs through both Testaments with a prominence which cannot be overlooked. It is seen in the law and in the gospel—in the writings of Moses and the prophets, and of Christ and his apostles. It need not be insisted how perfectly accordant is this doctrine with the internal consciousness and experience of every accountable man; nor how abundantly it is confirmed by the universal history of the world. In our present argument we take these matters for granted, referring for their proof to the appropriate place in the systems of divinity. But, we inquire, how can we account for the appearance of so clear and satisfactory a presentation of this doctrine in the Bible, and nowhere else? While the pagan nations, although they could not be ignorant of the fact of the general corruption of man, had very vague and indefinite notions as to the nature of this moral disease, and knew nothing of its origin and remedy, the Bible sheds abundant illumination upon the whole subject. While philosophy had been essaying in vain to determine whence this moral malady arose, and setting forth numerous fallacious and fruitless schemes for its control or eradication, revelation conducts us to the origin of our race, records the history of the fall of man, and proclaims and satisfactorily accounts for the moral corruption of the entire species. Now, we

demand, does not the fact that this great doctrine, whose truth is recorded upon the tablet of every conscience, and upon every page of the world's history, is thus fully revealed, both as to its nature and origin, in the Bible, and nowhere else, demonstrate that revelation is not of men, but from God?

2. But the Bible not only thus describes, in its true character, the moral state of man, but it sets forth the only true *remedy*. The doctrine of the *atonement*, running through all the law and the gospel, presents the only rational ground of pardon and salvation for the sinner of which the world has ever heard. Philosophy, falsely so called, and pseudo-theology, have prated much and long about the *mere mercy* of God, his *prerogative*, *repentance alone*, etc., as being rational and practicable grounds of pardon and salvation; but all these schemes have been clearly shown to be futile and inadequate. Besides, without revelation, what do we know of the abstract mercy and prerogative of God? If his mercy admits the sinner to suffer for his sins *here*, for a limited period, what assurance can we have, without revelation, that the same mercy will not consign him to endless sufferings *hereafter?* Indeed, without revelation we may realize that we are guilty, polluted, and miserable, but we can find no remedy. We are left to the uncertainty of conjecture, or the darkness of despair. Atonement, as exhibited in the Bible and nowhere else, furnishes the only remedy in the case. It alone shows how "God can be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

3. Again, man is not only guilty, and needs pardon, but he is *polluted*, and needs *cleansing*. The gospel also furnishes the *divine influence* upon the soul, to "cleanse it from all unrighteousness." "As the atonement of Christ stoops to the *judicial destitution* of man, the promise of the Holy Spirit meets the case of his *moral destitution*. One finds him without any means of satisfying the claims of justice, so as to exempt him from punishment; the other without the inclination or the strength to avail himself even of proclaimed clemency and offered pardon, and becomes the means of awakening his judgment, and exciting, and assisting, and crowning his efforts to obtain that boon and its consequent blessings. The one relieves him from the penalty, the other from the disease of sin; the former restores to man the favor of God, the other renews him in his image." (Watson's Institutes.)

Can that system be the contrivance of wicked impostors which alone furnishes information the most desirable, the most important, the most beneficial to man, which could possibly be conceived—which unfolds his true character, portrays his helpless condition, and points to his only

remedy? Can that revelation be an imposture which finds man in darkness and gives him light, in weakness and gives him strength, in guilt and gives him pardon, and in pollution and gives him sanctification? Can a system of doctrines so pregnant with truth, so adapted to our nature and necessities, and which so "commends itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God," be of earthly origin and device? Reason testifies, No; it cannot be! This great and sublime system which teaches the depravity and guilt of man through the fall, and his redemption and salvation through the atonement of Christ and the sanctification of the Spirit, is no plant of earthly production. It grew not in nature's soil. It is a seed which *could* only have originated and been warmed into life in the bosom of infinite Wisdom and Goodness.

4. Once more, the Scriptures alone bring fully to light the doctrine of *immortality*.

On this question pagan philosophy, in its most enlightened and virtuous phase, has ever trembled between hope and despair; but Christianity has exultantly "brought life and immortality to light." We need not say how necessary is a belief in this doctrine to our welfare and happiness in this life. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ," said an apostle, "we are of all men most miserable." Bereft of that hope of a future state of being and enjoyment, how cheerless and dreary would be the present! What of earth could be found worthy the attention and concern of our exalted powers? But to the Bible, and especially to the revealments of the New Testament, we are indebted for all the assurance we can gain of future reward for the privations, toils, and sufferings of the present state.

Upon this subject how driveling and unsatisfying are the dreamy conjectures of pagan philosophy! How infinitely superior to all *these* the solid and glowing hopes with which revelation inspires her votaries! David exclaims: "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness. . . . My flesh also shall rest in hope. . . . Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. . . . I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

The apostles of Christ were equally exultant in their expressions upon this subject. St. Paul exclaims: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. . . . For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And St. Peter speaks of "an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." St.

John says: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Can that revelation be an imposture which furnishes the only solid foundation for these glorious hopes? Surely a system of doctrine so well adapted to the nature, the necessities, and the hopes of man, must have God for its author!

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XIX

QUESTION 1. By what method do we prove the divinity of the Bible from its contents?

2. What three different class of men are those from whom the Bible *must* have emanated?

3. How is it shown that *bad* men *would* not and *could* not have written it?

4. How is it shown that *good, uninspired* men could not have written it?

5. By what class, then, must it have been written?

6. What is the argument founded on the character of Christ as portrayed in the New Testament?

7. What argument is drawn from the circumstances connected with the condemnation and death of Jesus?

8. What is the substance of Rousseau's admission on the subject?

9. What particular marks of genuineness do we find in the apostolic writings?

10. What is the argument from the style of the sacred writers?

11. How may an argument be founded on the doctrines of revelation?

12. To what particular doctrines is reference made?

CHAPTER XX.

EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE, CONSIDERED IN REFERENCE TO MEN IN GENERAL AND TO CHRISTIANS IN PARTICULAR.

"By their fruits ye shall know them," is one of the maxims of Jesus, which is not entirely dependent upon revelation for its sanction. Its truth and excellence are manifested and confirmed by the every-day transactions of life, and commend themselves to the common sense of every intelligent person. Philosophy teaches us to judge of the cause by the effect, in like manner as it is the dictate of practical common sense to judge of the tree by its fruit. To no subject does this principle apply with more propriety and force than to religion. After all the learned discussion of the evidences of Christianity, and the formidable array of arguments from miracles and prophecy, sustained and illustrated by appeals to history, philosophy, analogy, and reason; after all that may be so forcibly presented of the internal evidence founded on the consistency of the different parts of revelation, the character of the sacred writers, and the excellence of the doctrines revealed, there is still another species of internal evidence more forcible and convincing to the mass of common people than any we have yet named; we mean that evidence which results from *experience.*

I. We will contemplate this subject, *first*, in reference to the effects of Christianity, in *transforming the moral character of individuals.*

The system of truth is symmetrical and cohering. All its elements hang together, like links in a chain, as consistent parts of an harmonious whole. We assume it as a maxim that one truth can neither be inconsistent with another in its nature nor productive of evil in its tendency. According to this principle, therefore, it will be easy to subject the question, as to the truth or falsehood of Christianity, to an experimental test.

The great Founder of Christianity never required the people to believe in him without evidence. He embodied one of his maxims, by which all men might test the truth of his doctrines, in this interrogatory: "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" And God says

to rebellious Israel: "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Revelation boldly challenges to be tested. If there is aught within the whole range of science which can bear being tried upon the Baconian plan of *founding theory upon experiment*, it is Christianity. All that she demands is, that her doctrines may be fairly brought to this test. She has nothing to fear from the result. If Christianity be an imposture, a mere fabricated cheat, her tendency cannot but be evil; the stream must partake of the nature of the fountain. On the other hand, if the effect of Christianity is ascertained to be invariably *good*, then it will follow that it must be a system of truth.

1. Let us inquire then: What is the influence of Christianity upon the *moral character of individuals?* If we examine the testimony of the apostles themselves, we find them very explicit in regard to the moral change effected by Christianity. According to their teaching, Christianity produces a change in moral character from the love of sin and wickedness to the love of God and holiness. The believer has been "created anew in Christ Jesus." With him, in an important sense, "old things are passed away, and all things are become new." A new principle—a principle of life and holiness—is implanted within his soul. He lives, breathes, and moves within a new atmosphere. He sees God now, not as an angry, frowning Judge, but as a loving, a compassionate Father. His heart, which was "enmity against God, not subject to the law of God," now "cries out for the living God" in holy rapture, exclaiming: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." He has lost his desire to frequent the haunts of sin, and now he delights in the service of the sanctuary—the worship of God and the ways of righteousness and peace. He looks upon the people and the service of God, not with aversion, but with delight. Once he delighted in "the works of the flesh." "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like"—*these* were once the tyrants of his soul, but now, in his heart and life, he exhibits "the fruit of the Spirit." "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance"—*these* are the graces that fill his heart and adorn his life.

2. Any one, by examining the writings of the early *Christian apologists*, when defending the character of the persecuted Christians, will see that their testimony on this subject accords with that of the apostles. Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tertullian, Origen Lactantius, and

others, are very explicit in their accounts of the holy and self-sacrificing lives of the Christians. These direct testimonies of the Christian apologists were not disputed by their learned pagan opponents, which is sufficient evidence that their truth could not be safely denied. Indeed, some of them, as may be seen from the famous letter of Pliny to Trajan, already quoted, fully admitted the good moral character of Christians.

And we may confidently appeal to the observation of any candid person in Christian lands to testify to the reforming moral influence of Christianity. It is "known and read of all men" that thousands, in nearly all parts of Christendom, have been found by the gospel wicked, profane, profligate, malicious, lewd, drunken, or abandoned sinners, and been suddenly transformed into quiet, peaceable, sober, industrious, upright, and respectable citizens. Now, we ask, is there no argument in these facts? Are we to be told that a base, unprincipled impostor invented a religion more powerful in reforming the hearts and lives of the vicious than all the deep-studied theories, and learned lectures, and volumes of philosophers and sages? Are we to be required to believe that a system more influential in converting mankind from the practice of vice to the practice of virtue than all other schemes ever known to the world is a vile imposture, a record of profanity and lies? This absurd position must be occupied by the infidel, while he persists in rejecting Christianity; and we must allow him to choose his own position, however unreasonable, absurd, or inconsistent it may be in its character or ruinous in its consequences.

II. We next look at *the influence of Christianity upon the moral condition of* NATIONS AND COMMUNITIES.

It is only necessary for any intelligent eye to glance over the principal nations of the world to see the striking contrast in intelligence, morals, refinement, and all that can ennoble or render a people prosperous and happy between Christian nations and all others, whether pagan or Mohammedan. In Christian countries the light of civilization shines conspicuously, while throughout pagan and Mohammedan States the clouds of ignorance and superstition, to an appalling degree, rest upon the people. Liberty, equality, intelligence, science, good order, industry, refinement, benevolence, and virtue, are peculiar characteristics of Christian lands; but, on the other hand, where the Christian religion is unknown, barbarism, despotism, superstition, vileness, wretchedness, misery, and degradation, generally prevail.

Among numerous other instances that might be cited, look at the wonderful change effected by the gospel, in the course of only a few

years, in the condition of the lately benighted inhabitants of Greenland and of the Southern Pacific islands. But we need not dwell upon these facts; they stand publicly authenticated before the world, and appeal to every skeptic to look upon the *effects* of Christianity, and read in these facts the deep impress of the divinity of its origin.

III. Hitherto we have only spoken of the effects of Christianity, as they are outwardly visible, serving as evidence of the reality and excellence of religion, founded on what we witness in others. But we now call attention to another species of evidence which is *internal* in two senses of the word—as the schoolmen would say, both *objectively* and *subjectively;* that is, both in reference to the source or influence whence the evidence is derived and to the recipient by whom it is recognized. By this we mean *that* INTERNAL CONVICTION *produced in the mind, conscience, or heart of the individual, resulting from the gospel through the influence of the Holy Spirit.*

This evidence is referred to in the Scriptures as existing in two distinct stages or degrees. *First*, as connected with *conviction* in the heart or conscience of the sinner. This is implied in these words of St. Paul: "But by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Here the gospel, as presented by the apostles, is seen to carry to the conscience, even of the sinner, a degree of conviction that it is true.

The *second* division of this kind of evidence is what is termed the *witness of the Spirit*, which it is the privilege of every Christian to possess. This is spoken of by St. Paul in these words: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." It is also promised by our Saviour in these words: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." That is, on the condition of obeying the gospel, we are promised the knowledge of its truth.

1. We first notice that division of this species of evidence connected with *conviction.*

Within the great deep of our internal, spiritual nature, there lives a principle or faculty—call it conscience, the moral sense, God within us, or what we please—by which we can perceive a distinction between right and wrong, and gain an impression of the truth or falsehood of things set before the mind. That God, who made us, and who is the author of all our powers, can shine upon the *penetralia* of our internal nature, and cause us to apprehend truths addressed to our conscience as easily as he can send us the light of the sun to reveal to us through the eye the truths of nature about us, is a position too obvious to be doubted

Let any one discourse to us of the laws and operations of mind, or of the internal emotions by which we have been often influenced, and we may frequently feel as firm a conviction of the truth of the things thus communicated as it is possible for us to have of any fact we ever witnessed. And this conviction may not be the result of any process of ratiocination performed by the mind at the time, but may rise as spontaneously as the emotion of pleasure when we unexpectedly meet a much-loved friend. We may not be able fully to explain, or even to comprehend, the philosophy of this phenomenon, but of the truth of the fact we can have no doubt. We know that within the *arcana* of our inner nature there exists a something that receives, appropriates, approves, and confirms certain truths the moment they enter the mind. There is a light within us which often possesses such affinity for the light received from without, that no sooner do the rays of the two lights come to a focus on the same object than their perfect accordance is seen by the mind; and the testimony of the one is confirmed by that of the other. The voice from without is echoed in unison by the voice from within; in other words, the truth of revelation, entering the *penetralia* within us, finds its attestation in the bosom of the recipient. Thus it is that the divine word, sounding in the ear of the sinner, becomes a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart," and so probes the conscience, and lays bare the hitherto hidden anatomy of the soul, that the sinner is made to feel and to know that he has been listening to the voice of truth from on high. As the tribute-paying Jew, when he saw upon the coin the image and superscription of Cesar, knew to whom he owed political allegiance, even so the sinner, when he reads or hears the word of revelation, often perceives upon that word the signature of God so intelligibly impressed that he cannot doubt the divine source from whence it came.

This evidence of the truth of Christianity, connected with conviction for sin, is what every sinner throughout Christian lands, to a greater or less extent, has received. He may deny the fact of this conviction, and spurn the word, and resist the Spirit that produced it; but yet it is true that he has heard the voice of God speaking to his inner nature, and the voice of conscience echoed the words back to his soul, assuring him that the voice which had spoken came from heaven. Here, then, is an evidence of the truth of Christianity, resulting from the experience of every man who has ever heard the gospel, and been convinced by the testimony of his own conscience, that the message was from God. But this kind of evidence is only of force with him who receives it. He cannot impart it to others so as to render it intelligible and effica

cious in regard to them. At the moment when this evidence is manifested to his heart, it is vivid and impressive, often causing the sinner to tremble; but if he trifles with the voice that addresses him, saying, "Go thy way for this time," the insulted Spirit may leave him to harden and perish in his sins; and the traces of this evidence may become so dim as almost entirely to fade from his memory.

We now inquire: Can that gospel be a human invention which finds a confirming witness of its truth in every soul of man? Can that voice be a deceptive illusion which finds an echo in the conscience of every sinner? Has the God of nature placed in the bosom of all his accountable creatures a fallacious witness only to deceive and mislead them? Can that system which is a profane and wicked imposture "commend itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God"? There is in the Bible a tone of divine authority, an awful solemnity, a sacred and heavenly unction, which to every conscience, not entirely obdurated by sin, attests the divinity of its origin. Yet infidelity may laugh it to scorn. The incorrigible sinner may so inure himself to the impious crime of deriding this word, which his own conscience once bore him witness was the word of God, that he shall never again be impressed with its sacredness or truth till before the judgment-seat of Christ its unfolded pages shall flash conviction upon his soul. Nevertheless it is true, that as reason bears witness to all who impartially peruse the pages of nature, that all material things were created by the infinitely wise and beneficent God, even so does the conscience within the breast of all who, in a docile spirit and with a candid mind, read or hear the gospel of Christ bear witness that it is in truth the voice of God speaking to us from heaven by his Son.

But this voice of God, speaking, whether to saint or sinner, by his Son through the influence of the Spirit, is not to be understood as revealing any new truths not embraced in the Bible. The Spirit shines upon the sinner's heart, and "opens his understanding," but it is "that he may understand the Scriptures." The Spirit rends the vail and opens his eyes, but it is that he may "behold wondrous things out of the divine law."

2. There is one more division of the *experimental* evidence to which we now call attention: the indwelling *witness of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the Christian.*

It would be entirely aside from our purpose here, and irrelevant to our present argument, to enter upon the mooted question as to the manner in which the influence of the Spirit is imparted. All with which we are at present concerned is the fact that the Spirit is prom-

ised to the Christian, not only to certify his adoption as a child of God, but also to assure him of the truth of the Christian doctrine. Both these points are abundantly established in the Scriptures we have quoted. Other texts to the same effect might be adduced, but we deem it unnecessary to delay farther to prove a position which we think will not be disputed.

The argument here proposed is this: Christ has promised that all who do his will shall *know* of the truth of his doctrine, and the apostle teaches that the Spirit testifies to every Christian the *fact* of his adoption; hence it follows, as Christ cannot fail in his promise, and as the apostle has taught the truth, that every Christian has the most indubitable evidence that Christianity is true. This evidence has the advantage over both the external evidence and every other species of the internal evidence. Like the best wine kept for the last of the feast, this is the last, the crowning evidence which God imparts of the truth of his religion. Other evidence is abundant and satisfactory, sufficient to remove all reasonable doubt, but this is absolutely infallible. Other evidence is dependent on the capacity, integrity, and depositions, of fallible men, and the deductions of our fallible reason; but here is evidence, passing through no fallible channel, having no fallible prop for its support, dependent on no fallible reasoning for its validity. Indeed, so direct, all-conclusive, and infallibly certain, is this evidence, that it can suffer no diminution of its strength and efficacy from the ignorance, the weakness, the blunders, or the fallibility, of him to whom it is given. It depends entirely upon an infallible source, not only as a guarantee that it shall be properly set forth in all its appropriate and convincing efficacy, but that it shall be correctly understood, duly apprehended, and fully relied upon, by all to whom it is given. All this is pledged by Him who is infallible, and whose every promise, his attributes assure us, he certainly will fulfill. Furthermore, this evidence, unlike every other species of evidence, is alike conclusive and satisfactory to all to whom it is given, to whatever class they may belong. To the rich and the poor, to the high and the low, to the ignorant and the learned, to the patrician and the plebeian, to the sage and the savage, to *all*, it is alike intelligible and satisfactory. It removes from all the last vestige of doubt, and settles and confirms them in the full assurance that their faith rests not "in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

This evidence, it is true, is not vouchsafed to all men indiscriminately. It is the property of the Christian alone; and, in the nature of things, none else can possess it. It results from an experience which none can realize without becoming a Christian. To impart such evi-

dence as *this* to the sinner might infringe upon his free agency, and make him a Christian without consulting his will, contrary to the gospel-plan. But while this evidence is restricted to the Christian alone, and cannot be so imparted by him to others as to enable them to realize its convincing power, it is yet, to his own mind, more convincing and satisfactory than all other evidence taken together. And to vast numbers of the masses of the common, uneducated people, the experimental evidence, in its two branches, as pertaining to the sinner and the Christian, is all that they possess, or are capable of comprehending.

That the Christian religion is thus adapted to the circumstances of all classes of the human family, is another evidence that it originated in the infinite wisdom and goodness of God. He who made us, and who perfectly understands all our imbecilities, as he delights to do his needy creatures good, could not bestow upon us a religion that all might not be capable of receiving and enjoying. And as the larger portion of the human family are uneducated, and quite incapable of examining the historical and philosophical arguments founded on miracles and prophecy, how destitute would be their condition if they were left without any evidence of the truth of religion which their capacity and circumstances could reach! Without the experimental evidence, the Christian religion would lack one essential element of being adapted to "the poor;" and our Saviour specifies, as one proof of his Messiahship, the fact that "the poor have the gospel preached unto them." Bearing along with it the sanction of its own divinity, the gospel can visit the hovels of the poor and indigent, the unlettered outcasts from society, and even the untaught savages of the wilderness, and all it asks is the means of access to their inner nature, an interpreter who can convey its truths to their understanding, and can speak to them in a voice that will convince them that its credentials are from God. Thus, it can become unto all, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether Greeks or barbarians, "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Again, this experimental evidence most decidedly deprives the skeptic of every rational ground of objection to religion. It calls upon him to settle his every doubt by experimental demonstration. "Prove me, . . . saith the Lord of hosts, . . . and I will pour you out a blessing." "If any man will do his will," saith Jesus, "he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

It was unreasonable in the Syrian captain to hesitate about washing in the waters of Jordan to be healed of his leprosy; and had the blind man, whom our Saviour directed to "wash in the pool of Siloam,"

refused to comply with this command, he would have deserved to grope in darkness all his days. What, then, shall be thought of the proud and haughty skeptic who persists in urging his senseless cavils and oft-refuted arguments against Christianity, but will not consent to test the question by our Saviour's experimental criterion? "Do my will," saith Jesus, "and you shall know of the doctrine." That is, submit to the requirements of the gospel, obey my commandments, and you shall have evidence to convince you, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that my religion is divine. The yoke of Christ is easy, and his burden is light; and it is no hard condition for the sinner to be required to do the will of Christ that he may test the truth of his doctrines. Let infidelity cease to deride that Saviour whom she has never attempted to follow or obey, let her no longer scoff at that religion she has never proved, but let her meet the issue fairly, upon the arena of the experimental test, as Christianity proposes, or let her cease her ridicule and vituperation forever.

3. Once more, we ask the attention to the argument for the truth of Christianity founded upon the *testimony of Christians concerning their experience.* As a man born blind, though he cannot realize from experience the distinction of colors, may, nevertheless, be satisfied on the testimony of others that such distinction exists; even so, though the Christian can never convey to the understanding of the sinner an adequate conception of the experimental evidence as realized in his own soul, yet he may exhibit such testimony concerning it as ought to "convince the gainsayers" that he "has not followed a cunningly-devised fable." St. Paul, when permitted to speak for himself, related the history of his conversion; and the publication of that remarkable occurrence has doubtless been the means of convincing thousands of the truth of Christianity. The language of St. John is: "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you." It cannot be questioned that the sincerity and earnestness which have been exhibited by Christians in every age, in testifying "how great things the Lord has done for them," have wielded a powerful influence in the conversion of unbelievers to the faith. What a wonderful array of evidence of this description has the Church, in every age, set before the world! Multiplied thousands, under the most trying circumstances, have sealed the truth of their profession with their blood. A "noble army of martyrs" have shouted the praise of God amid the flames. Now, we demand: Is the testimony of all these Christians, as to the power and consolations of that religion which they experienced, of no avail?

Let infidelity cease her cavils and quibbles, let her pause in her

career of ridicule and abuse, and come at once and prove, if she can, the falsehood of Christianity by the test of experience! Multitudes have realized by experience its saving power, and, were it possible for all other arguments on the subject to be forgotten, thousands would cling to Christian experience as the richest heritage of fallen humanity, imparting the greatest consolation in this life, and inspiring the brightest hopes in reference to the next.

Although this experimental evidence is unquestionably the most overwhelmingly convincing of any that can be obtained in this life, yet it has ever been repulsive to the feelings of the unrenewed soul. In unsanctified human nature there is a principle of instinctive rebellion against the spirituality of religion. Perhaps the ground of this is to be found mainly in the fact that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." To an unlettered peasant, who had never heard any thing of the science of astronomy, the fact that an eclipse of the sun can be calculated for centuries before it occurs, and the precise time of the phenomenon predicted, would perhaps be as mysterious and as repugnant to his faith as are the spiritual things of religion to the unbelieving heart. But let that peasant be regularly instructed in the principles of mathematical and astronomical science, leading him, step by step, from the foundation-axioms up to the abstruse calculations of astronomy, and the mystery will be dispelled, and he will see that it all must be true, and cannot be otherwise. Even so in religion there is a commencement, a progression, and a maturity. We can see no good reason why those who are strangers to the experimental evidence of Christianity should reject that evidence upon the testimony of Christians, while they rely confidently on the testimony of philosophers and astronomers, in reference to experiments and calculations as mysterious and incomprehensible to them as can be the things of religion. If all good astronomers agree in testifying that eclipses can be calculated with accuracy, even so all good Christians agree in affirming that "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."

If it be said that we have much collateral testimony to satisfy us that the statements of philosophers and astronomers, in reference to their experiments and calculations, are true; even so, we demand, is there not abundant evidence, beside the mere affirmation of Christians, confirming the truth of their testimony in relation to their Christian experience? Is there not all the evidence of this kind that the nature of the subject admits? Would not similar testimony, derived from the

same witnesses, convince any rational mind of the truth of any facts in reference to the things of this world? And if so, why should we adopt a new mode of reasoning whenever we pass from questions of philosophy or experimental facts pertaining to temporal affairs, to the *religious experience* of the same persons? Is skepticism so pressed and crippled in her crusade against experimental religion that, whenever *that* subject is brought upon the arena, she is driven, in order to keep her principles in countenance, to ignore all her ordinary rules of logic, and resort to a new method of argumentation, and one never admitted or thought of except when the object is to discredit the claims of experimental religion? Were not this the case, there is not a rational mind beneath the sun that could for a moment resist the sweeping tide of testimony by which the reality of experimental Christianity has been confirmed.

Passing by the millions of sincere Christians who, in every age of the gospel dispensation, in the humble walks of life, have professed to have experienced the power of this religion in their hearts, and have exultantly proclaimed the reality of its consolations and hopes—this experimental religion has numbered among its advocates many of the brightest luminaries in the galaxy of learning and science. Men of the loftiest genius and talent, and of the most inestimable probity and moral worth; for example, Lord Chief-Justice Hale, Pascal, Newton, Boyle, Locke, Addison, Boerhaave, Lord Littleton, Baron Haller, Sir William Jones, and James Beattie—all men of giant intellect and of world-renowned literary fame; these have all professed with their lips this experimental Christianity, and exhibited its fruits in their lives. In reference to any statement of historic fact which they had witnessed, or any scientific experiment they had tried, their testimony would be undoubted before any court of law or college of philosophy on earth. Why, then, should their statements as to their experience of Christianity, and the inspoken witness of God to their hearts that the doctrine of Christ is of God, be not only discredited but stigmatized and ridiculed as a fanatical delusion?

Can infidelity boast of such a host of worthies among her adherents to palliate, if possible, her inconsistency in rejecting such testimony? What has been the moral standing of *her* most illustrious apostles? As observed by Watson: "They show in their own characters the effect of their unbelief, and probably the chief cause of it. Blount committed suicide, because he was prevented from an incestuous marriage; Tyndal was notoriously infamous; Hobbes changed his principles with his interests; Morgan continued to profess Christianity while he wrote

against it; the moral character of Voltaire was mean and detestable, Bolingbroke was a rake and a flagitious politician; Collins and Shaftesbury qualified themselves for civil offices by receiving the sacrament, whilst they were endeavoring to prove the religion of which it is a solemn expression of belief, a mere imposture; Hume was revengeful, disgustingly vain, and an advocate of adultery and self-murder; Paine was the slave of low and degrading habits; Rousseau an abandoned sensualist, and guilty of the basest actions, which he scruples not to state and palliate." Are we to be called upon to enroll ourselves as disciples of these men, who have added to the sophistry and inconsistency of their reasoning, as a comment on the tendency of their principles, the flagitiousness of their lives? No, we will cling to the Bible as our light and our salvation, as our only solid ground of comfort and hope in a world of sorrow and affliction. We will enroll our names with the extended list of saints and martyrs who, "in all time of their affliction," have derived solace and comfort from the inspired pages of the word of life. Let infidelity oppose and deride, ridicule and scoff—let all the ingenuity and malice of skeptics and demons combine to condemn or stigmatize, to disprove or destroy—the revelation of God to man, their counsel shall be frustrated, their efforts shall prove fruitless, and their labor shall perish; but the Bible, more indestructible than monuments of marble, more enduring than the hills, shall still remain! It is the word of God, "which liveth and abideth forever." "Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book!"

"Were all the sea one chrysolite,
And all this earth one golden ball,
And diamonds all the stars of night,
This precious book were worth them all."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XX.

QUESTION 1. What species of evidence is the most convincing to the mass of common people?

2. In what three divisions has the argument from *experience* been presented?

What is the argument founded upon the transforming influence of Christianity upon the moral character of individuals?

4. What is the influence of Christianity upon the moral condition of nations and communities, and how is its divinity thereby shown?

5. What evidence is that referred to which is *internal* in two senses?

6. In what two stages is this evidence spoken of in Scripture?

7. What is the nature of this evidence as connected with conviction?

8. What is the last division of experimental evidence referred to?

9. For what double purpose is the Spirit promised to the Christian?

10. Wherein consists the superiority of this to every other class of testimony?

11. What class of persons can realize the force of this evidence?

12. How may it be shown that this experimental evidence deprives the skeptic of every rational ground of objection to religion?

13. How can we account for the general prejudice of unbelievers against the experimental evidence of religion?

PART III.—THE MORALS OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK I.—INTRODUCTORY PRINCIPLES.

CHAPTER I.

CONNECTION BETWEEN MORAL PHILOSOPHY AND DIVINE REVELATION — THE MANNER IN WHICH MORALS ARE TAUGHT IN THE SCRIPTURES.

I. REVELATION THE SOURCE OF CHRISTIAN MORALS.

Not only in pagan countries, but even in Christian lands, systems of morals have been devised and published with little or no reference to the teachings of the Bible upon that subject. That Socrates, Plato, Seneca, and others, in the most enlightened age of Grecian and Roman learning, should plod their way amid the abstruse intricacies of ethical science as best they could, guided only by the light of nature and the dim reflections of tradition, is all that could be expected of benighted heathens. But that men of science, upon whose minds the beams of revelation have shone, should exhibit to the world systems upon this subject derived mainly from the light of nature, referring to the sacred Scriptures only as a source of confirmatory evidence, is marvelous in the extreme. With those who admit the truth of revelation, the Bible is the great source of information upon this as well as upon all other questions encompassed by its teachings. Since God has furnished in his word a revelation of "the whole duty of man," we may with as much propriety attempt to work out from the quarry of nature the plan of salvation as a system of morals. Revelation is as truly the standard upon the one subject as the other, and we cannot directly or indirectly ignore the fact, without dishonoring the Christian name. But while the Bible is the highest authority upon this subject—indeed, the only infal-

sible guide—the teachings of nature, so far as they extend or can be understood by us, may be useful as tending to confirm and illustrate the word of revelation. So far as human reason can penetrate into the rationale of moral precept, it ought to be unhesitatingly employed, and may contribute to our more enlightened perception of the excellency and value of revealed truth; yet it should not be forgotten that while, in reference to some duties, no reason of their propriety can be seen except the divine command, in all these reasons are but imperfectly understood, and, at best, do not furnish the *ground of obligation—this* rests solely on the divine command.

In regard to the pagan philosophers of antiquity, although their views concerning God and the principles of morals were exceedingly erroneous and degrading, yet it must be admitted that some of them at times uttered some sublime and noble sentiments upon these topics. But that their most consistent and elevated thoughts upon these themes resulted from the efforts of their own unassisted reason, we have no evidence for believing; on the contrary, we have very satisfactory proof that for all their most valuable teachings, both in reference to the one supreme God and the nature of moral rectitude, they were indebted to the light of revelation, either reflected from tradition or from the Jewish Scriptures, whose influence, direct or indirect, was, to some extent, diffused among them. Hence we conclude that human reason, unaided by revelation, so far as evinced by the efforts of ancient pagan philosophy, was not only unable, "by searching to find out God," but was too feeble to discover the foundation principles, much less to shape a correct system, of moral philosophy.

To all who are acquainted with the literature of pagan philosophers and deistical writers, it is notorious that they have greatly improved since the commencement of the Christian era. They have not only enlarged the circle of matters embraced in their philosophy, but they have more enlightened views concerning the principles of virtue and vice, much clearer and less erroneous conceptions of the distinctions between right and wrong, than are found in the writings of the more ancient pagan or deistical authors. Whence this superior light possessed by modern rejecters of revelation, when compared with more ancient pagan philosophers, has originated, is no difficult problem to solve. It has not resulted either from superior intellect, greater industry, or higher attainments in general literature, on the part of the moderns, but from the fact that they have lived in an age subsequent to the birth of Jesus, and been enlightened by the beams of his gospel

That unbelievers in revelation should write upon moral philosophy, enriching their pages with many sublime thoughts and noble sentiments pilfered from revelation, and which could have been derived from no other source, making no acknowledgment of their indebtedness to revelation, is a disingenuousness not inconsistent with the general characteristics of skepticism; but that professed believers in Christianity, and even eminent divines, should have persisted so long in "seeking for the living among the dead," attempting to rear the temple of moral philosophy, using only the tools furnished by the cabinet of nature and the materials derived from her magazines, is a fact marvelously unaccountable and much to be lamented.

What good apology can be offered, or what reasonable palliation can be pleaded, for this real though unintentional disrespect for revelation on the part of many of our able and learned divines? How can they justify themselves for endeavoring to walk by the twilight of nature when they had access to the meridian sunlight of the gospel, by which they might have guided their every step? Because nature may serve as a useful handmaid to revelation, contributing her feebler light as confirmatory evidence of truths more luminously set forth by the pages of revelation, are we therefore justifiable in exalting her to the foremost position as the presiding genius in the erection of the temple of moral philosophy?

Let us inquire what nature or unassisted human reason *can* do, and what she *cannot* do, in connection with moral philosophy.

Natural religion, or human reason, alone may impart an imperfect idea of the distinction between right and wrong, but she can draw no fixed and intelligible line between them, nor exhibit any authoritative ground of obligation to *do* what is right and to *refrain from doing* what is wrong. It is evident that the code of morals clearly discoverable by human reason is exceedingly limited and imperfect; and even in that limited extent to which it may conduct us, its principles would ever be left resting on a basis of uncertainty. Being the result of human reason, they would be differently understood by different minds; and if they were understood and interpreted alike by all, they would even then lack that sanction of *authority* which is necessary to give them the character of law, and render them an obligatory rule of life.

Some of the principles of morality, as taught in revelation, come under the head of *positive* precepts—that is, they contain nothing in themselves, discoverable by human reason, rendering what they enjoin right or proper, except the command of God. Other principles of Bible morality come under the head of *moral* precepts (as they are

called, for the sake of distinction), or such as enjoin duties the propriety or reason of which may, to some extent, be discovered by human reason. For illustration, the interdiction of the fruit of "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" is styled a *positive* precept, because we can see no propriety in the requirement except what results from the fact that it has been commanded · yet, when once a duty under this head has been commanded, it is, in strictness of speech, as really a *moral* duty as any other, and we are under equal obligations to obey it. Our obligations to obey God result not from the fact that we perceive the propriety of the duty in question, but *solely* from the right of God to command, and the fact that the command has been issued.

In regard, then, to duties embraced under the head of *positive* precepts, according to the above definitions, the light of nature can render us no aid, and human reason is utterly powerless. But in reference to those duties embraced under the head of *moral* precepts, when once they have been revealed and enjoined, the reason and propriety of some of them may be partially discovered by the light of nature; but even in those cases we can have no evidence that we comprehend fully all the reasons existing in the Divine Mind on which those duties are founded. For when we admit, as we are bound to do, that God has commanded some duties, no reason for which can be perceived by us beyond the fact of the command, yet, as God can do nothing without a wise and sufficient reason, we are compelled to believe that, even in all such cases, there exist in the Divine Mind adequate reasons for his commands; but they are beyond the reach of our capacity.

Hence, upon the same principle of reasoning, when God issues a command, some of the reasons of which we may perceive, we know not what farther reasons may still lie beyond our reach. If, in some cases, we know that reasons exist when we can perceive none, the fact that in other cases we perceive some reasons, can be no evidence against the existence of others yet hidden from our view.

It appears clear to us that, with the Christian philosopher, the light of nature has no part in furnishing the basis or the criterion of morals, or in setting forth the ground of our obligation. It is utterly beyond her province to devise and frame a system of moral philosophy for a man who holds in his hand a Bible which he believes "contains all things necessary for life and godliness," and may "thoroughly furnish him unto every good word and work."

All that nature or mere human reason *can* do, is this: 1. She may aid us in the interpretation of Scripture, that we may rightly understand our duty as set forth in revelation. 2. She may render her cor-

roborative testimony, so far as her light can penetrate, in regard to the reasonableness and propriety of duties as portrayed in the revealed will of God. In this way she may be a useful handmaid of revelation, accompanying the Christian while he is studying his system of morals as taught in the Bible, and, in all cases in which she is capable, superadding to the divine revealments of Heaven the confirmatory evidence of her feebler voice; thus increasing the confidence and rendering more pleasing the duties of the Christian.

Nature alone can no more furnish for the Christian his system of *morals* than his system of *doctrines*. It is certainly very strangely inconsistent for us to appeal to the Bible as our standard and guide, while on the subject of doctrines, and then, as soon as we approach the question of morals, to forget that Moses and the prophets, and Christ and his apostles, have ever spoken upon the subject; and appeal *first* to nature and reason, and pretend to educe from them, as materials of their own furnishing, principles which they never knew except as they learned them from the Bible, and thus mold and shape a system of morals, giving the credit for its formation to nature and reason, when it does not, in truth, embrace a single important principle that has not been derived from revelation.

Learned pagans, independent of revelation, never knew the distinction between virtue and vice—between right and wrong. Infidels may be allowed to embody the ethics of St. John and the divine philosophy of Jesus in their treatises, and call all their stolen materials the philosophy of nature; but let not Christian moralists "worship and serve the creature more than the Creator"! Let *them* not vie with infidelity, however unintentionally, in crowning the goddess of reason with the glory belonging to the God of the Bible! Let them cease all pretention to the formation of a system of morals from the teachings of nature! Let them start with the Bible, be guided by the Bible, and only employ the lesser light of nature as subsidiary and tributary to the more luminous beams of the great Sun of revelation!

If we thus restrict the province of natural religion to its legitimate sphere, it may serve a valuable purpose in connection with moral philosophy. It may furnish us additional confirmation of our faith in the principles of morality, as developed in the Bible, as well as useful illustrations of the superior excellence—yea, the sublime perfection—of that divinely-revealed system of Christian morals. But if we persist in going to nature's garden in quest of fruit which can only be found in the fields of divine revelation, we thereby must, to some extent, however remote it may be from our design, bring discredit upon that glo

rious system of morality unfolded in the teachings of Christ and his apostles. If the gospel of Christ had failed to embody "the whole duty of man," either in specific precepts or general principles, the absurdity of Christian divines pretending to found systems of moral philosophy mainly on natural religion would not be so glaring. But, we demand, What duty is not comprised in the New Testament, either specifically or in a general principle? and where, in all the treatises of mere human philosophy, can be found principles so pure, so heavenly, so free from error, so absolutely perfect, and set forth in language so unambiguous, so simple, so comprehensive, so sublime? Then "to the law and to the testimony" we should make our appeal.

Having shown that divine revelation is the only proper and adequate source from which the Christian must derive his system of morals, we now proceed to inquire concerning—

II. THE MANNER IN WHICH MORALS ARE TAUGHT IN THE SCRIPTURES.

1. The first question to be here considered is this: Are the morals of Christianity to be deduced solely from the New Testament, or should the Old Testament writings also be consulted, as possessing to any extent divine authority on the subject?

It requires but a cursory examination of the question to perceive that large portions of the Old Testament are far less essential to the Christian than the teachings of the New Testament, whether doctrines or duties be the matter of inquiry. Yet this admission will by no means justify the position taken by some claiming the Christian name—that the Old Testament, under the Christian dispensation, is mainly an antiquated volume, useful as an instructive history of the past, but that its precepts of morality possess no divine authority, except so far as they have been formally reënacted in the New Testament.

Our first objection to this position is, that it is entirely gratuitous, having no authority from the teachings of Christ and his apostles. They never intimated that the Jewish Scriptures had been superseded or annulled by the gospel, but everywhere spoke of them with the deepest reverence as the authoritative word of God.

Next, this position seems inconsistent with the principles of reason, as applicable to the question. It is an admitted principle in jurisprudence, that a law is only binding when enacted by a power possessing authority in the premises, but that, when thus enacted without any limiting clause showing that at a given period, or under certain circumstances, it shall cease to be a law, it must remain in force till the same power that enacted it, or another power of equal authority, shall for-

mally repeal it. Now, as the Old Testament is the acknowledged word of God, given by "holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," without any intimation that its authority was ever to cease or be diminished, it necessarily follows that it is still in force except so far as it may be clearly shown from the teachings of Christ and his apostles that it has been superseded, has received its complete fulfillment, or is inapplicable.

The extent to which the precepts of the Old Testament are applicable to Christians under the gospel, is rendered very clear by the teachings of Christ and his apostles. To say that no portion of the Mosaic law is binding upon Christians, except what has been formally reënacted, would not only be incorrect, according to our reasoning as above, but it would be contrary to the teachings of the New Testament. Our Saviour and his apostles always referred to the Jewish Scriptures as of binding authority, except such portions as have received their complete fulfillment under the gospel, as being types or shadows of better things to come, and such as were merely ceremonial or political, and only applicable to the Mosaic economy and Jewish polity while they continued. Therefore the correct rule on the subject is, that the Old Testament teachings, embracing the writings of Moses and the prophets, are still in force, so far as they can apply to Christians under the gospel, except so far as they have been repealed or plainly set aside by the teachings and example of Christ and his apostles.

It is very plain, therefore, that the types and shadows under the law have been superseded by the coming of the great Antitype, and the introduction of the substance, or "better things," under the gospel. But as to the moral law of Moses, the substance of which was comprehensively embraced in the Decalogue, so far from it being superseded by the gospel, it has been abundantly referred to by the Saviour and his apostles—not as being abrogated by the gospel, nor yet as having been formally reënacted, but as still existing, and of binding authority, without any reënactment. In his Sermon on the Mount, in direct reference to the law of Moses, our Saviour says: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. v. 17–19. That this passage had reference to the whole Mosaic law, embracing its sacrificial, ceremonial

and moral divisions, is very manifest. Even the types, the sacrifices and the ceremonies, he came not to destroy—not to overturn or frustrate their design or import—not to pervert their significancy or destroy their intended connection with the great spiritual things in the gospel, of which they were the shadows—but "to fulfill." And it is this ceremonial law, doubtless, to which he refers, when he says: "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." But it is equally evident that, when he pronounces condemnation on him who "shall break one of these least commandments," and expresses his approval of him who "shall do and teach them," he refers to the Decalogue. The plain inference therefore is, that this great moral code is in force under the gospel. As no part of the law was to pass till it should be fulfilled, and as the moral law is still as susceptible of being fulfilled under the gospel as it was in the days of Moses, it still must remain alike applicable to all ages, all countries, and all dispensations.

Again, in his conversation with the rich young nobleman who inquired what he must "do to inherit eternal life," our Saviour fully recognizes the authority of the moral law of Moses. He does not intimate that that law was abrogated, but directs the young man to "the commandments;" and, on being asked "which," the Saviour proceeded to quote several of them, as recorded in the Decalogue, giving evidence that he referred to the Ten Commandments written by "the finger of God" upon the tables of stone.

So likewise St. Paul, after having set forth the doctrine of "justification by faith," lest any should suppose he undervalued the moral law of Moses, exclaims: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we *establish* the law."

Farther, there is not a single precept of the Decalogue which is not either expressly quoted by Christ or his apostles as of binding authority or its substance explicitly enjoined. And when our Saviour was interrogated by a lawyer, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" he did not reply that he had come to abrogate those commandments, but proceeded to give them his most unqualified sanction, by embodying the substance of the two tables in two great commandments. "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." It is impossible to conceive of a more full and thorough indorsement of the entire moral code of the Old Testament

than is furnished in these words of our Saviour. He does not quote the exact language of the Old Testament precepts, but he does what is better—he professedly gives the substance of "all the law and the proph ets," and that, too, in language more comprehensive and of a deeper and more spiritual import. This gives to the Decalogue a higher sanction than if he had formally reënacted each one of the Ten Commandments. It not only substantially reënacts them, recognizing their binding authority, but it enlarges their application, extending them not only to the actions of the life, but to the thoughts and emotions of the heart. That our Saviour professedly embodied "all the law and the prophets" in these two great commandments cannot be disputed without flatly contradicting his own words; hence there is no escape from the conclusion, that he either failed to do what he professed to do, or he most expressly and fully sanctioned with his authority the entire moral law as taught by Moses and the prophets. Thus we conclude that the morals of Christianity as legitimately comprise the great moral precepts of Moses and the prophets recorded in the Old Testament, as they do the discourses of Christ and the teachings of his inspired apostles.

The fact that morals are not exhibited in Scripture in the shape of a *regular code*, can be no valid ground of objection. Moral principles in the Bible, are often unfolded incidentally in connection with facts out of which they naturally grow; and this very circumstance, by connecting in the same view both the principle and its practical illustration, is calculated, not only to impart to the understanding a clearer perception of the principle itself, but to impress it more vividly upon the memory.

Again, it can be no real objection to the Bible, as the source of moral philosophy, that some Christian duties are not specifically named therein, and formally enjoined. Had a regular code of morals been set forth in Scripture minutely specifying every Christian duty that might arise under every variety of circumstance in life, throughout all countries and all ages, the volume must necessarily have been increased in size beyond all reasonable dimensions, so that "even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." The inconvenience that might seem to result from the fact that a large portion of the morals of Christianity is comprised in Scripture under general principles, is more than counterbalanced by the character of these general principles and the manner in which they are exhibited. As to the principles themselves, we have the firmest possible assurance that they contain *truth* without any mixture of error—truth that will remain

the same in all ages and in all places. And these important principles are presented in language not only sublime and comprehensive, but remarkably plain — level to the comprehension of every accountable being.

A peculiar beauty and force in our Saviour's teachings were seen and felt in his use of the parable. By this method of instruction he often imparted, in a manner the most easy and captivating, the clearest conception of duties the most important.

Another peculiar excellence of the teaching of morals, as exhibited in the Scriptures, is, the sanctions by which they are ever enforced. These heaven-taught duties are not urged by considerations of a worldly nature. Things of earth are comparatively forgotten or despised, and man is addressed as an accountable candidate for the retributions of eternity. He is admonished to "look not at the things which are seen, that are temporal; but at the things which are not seen, that are eternal." And thus, with the promise of eternal life to encourage our hope, and the threatening of eternal death to alarm our fear, we are commanded to pursue "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER I.

QUESTION 1. With Christians, what is the great source of information on the subject of morals?

2. How has this fact been treated by many Christian writers on the subject?

3. To what extent may the teachings of nature be here useful?

4. What were the attainments of pagan philosophers upon this subject?

5. How did *they* derive their most valuable knowledge on the subject of morals?

6. Since the commencement of the Christian era, what change is manifest in the views of pagan and deistical writers, and how is this to be accounted for?

7. In what way have many able Christian writers exhibited apparent disrespect for the Bible?

8. What *may* natural religion teach on this subject?

9. Do Christian morals come under the head of *positive* or *moral* precepts?

10. What aid can nature render us in reference to *positive* precepts?

11. What in reference to *moral* precepts?

12. May we suppose that a real reason exists for all God's commands?

13. What are two things here named that human reason can do?

14. Does the Bible unfold *completely* the duty of man?

15. On this subject, is all our information to be taken from the New Testament?

16. How are we to know what portion of the Old Testament *is* and what *is not* now binding?

17. How can it be shown that the Decalogue is now binding?

18. Are morals taught in the Bible in the form of a regular code?

19. Are all moral duties specifically named in Scripture?

CHAPTER II.

PHILOSOPHICAL THESES EXHIBITED—THE NATURE OF RECTITUDE—THE GROUND OF MORAL OBLIGATION.

LOCKE'S philosophy, called *Sensationalism*, and the more modern opposing system called *Transcendentalism*, err on opposite extremes.

I. THE FOLLOWING THESES SEEM TO EMBODY THE TRUE MEDIUM GROUNDS, EXHIBITING THE CONNECTION OF PHILOSOPHY WITH MORALS:

1. Man is naturally endued with both *intellectual* and *moral* faculties.

2. These faculties, in their strictly native state, do not imply the possession of either *knowledge* or *moral principle*, but a susceptibility for the reception and acquirement of both.

3. In an intellectual sense, the native powers or faculties are aroused from their slumber and set to work, in the acquirement of knowledge, by the entrance of light through the medium of *external sensation*.

4. In a moral sense, our native powers or faculties are aroused from their slumber, and set to work, in the discernment between *right* and *wrong* by the illuminations of divine grace. John i. 9; James i. 17. Dr. Clarke says (see Rom. ii. 16): "I know of no light in nature that is not kindled there by the grace of God. But I have no objection to this sense: 'When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by the influence of God upon their heart the things contained in the law, they are a law unto themselves;' that light and influence serving instead of a divine revelation."

5. The erroneous extreme of Locke's system of sensationalism seems to be this—that it denies to the mind the power of acquiring any knowledge, the materials of which have not been originally derived through the medium of external sensation, ignoring the fact that man is possessed, in his native state, of a "moral sense" or an internal faculty of conscience, which, when aroused and enlightened by divine grace, enables him through the medium of internal consciousness to learn the distinction between *right* and *wrong*, so that all men are "without excuse." Rom. i. 20. The extreme of this system leads to materialism.

6. The erroneous extreme of modern transcendentalism seems to be this: that it attributes entirely to *nature* the power of the "moral sense" to teach the distinction between right and wrong, giving to that *native power* the same ability, without supernatural aid, to learn the distinction between right and wrong that the intellect possesses to learn the distinction between black and white, sweet and bitter, straight and crooked, or two and four; thus ignoring the divine illuminations imparted to all men through the atonement of Christ and the influence of the Spirit. The extreme of this system leads to Pelagianism and rationalism.

7. The elements of knowledge are derived through external sensation and internal consciousness.

8. Right and wrong are eternal and unchangeable principles, inherently and essentially different in their nature.

9. Our knowledge of the existence of right and wrong, and of the distinction between them, is derived, primarily, either from instruction, tradition, direct revelation, or the testimony of internal consciousness (the voice of conscience), when the moral sense has been aroused and illumined by divine grace.

10. Our *obligation* to do right is founded on the *will* of our Creator.

11. The will of God is nothing essentially distinct or different from God, but is only a transcript of the divine nature, or a manifestation of the divine attributes.

12. We are bound to obey the will of God, because he made us what we are, and, by his continued power, preserves us in being as we are.

13. The will of God, so far as known to us, is to us the *rule* of right and wrong, whether we perceive the reasons of that will or not.

14. Hence it follows, as the will of God is to us the rule of moral duty, even when the reasons of that will are not perceived, therefore the ground of obligation cannot be found, primarily and principally, in the eternal distinctions between right and wrong, but in the manifested will of God. If the ground of obligation is in the divine reason (as distinguished from the divine *will*), then the obligation could only *be felt* as the divine reason *is perceived.* But it must be admitted by all that, in many cases, obligation *exists* and *is felt* when the *reason* of the duty *is not perceived*, and there is nothing for the obligation to rest upon but the divine *will;* therefore, in all such cases, the obligation must rest on the divine will as its *basis*, and we must also be governed by that will as the *rule* of duty. It may be objected that, "in all cases, where obligation exists, and the reasons of it are not perceived, and it seems to rest solely on the divine command, the fact of the command

presupposes the existence of the reasons; for the command of God can no more transcend the divine reason than one of his attributes can fight against another." To this position, we reply: First, if the divine reason must necessarily always correspond with the divine command, then, so far as this question is concerned, the divine reason and the divine command are identical—they go hand in hand, and, in the case before us, are but two words for the same thing; only there is this perceptible difference, the divine command is plainer and more within our grasp than the divine reason, therefore safer and more accessible as the *ground* and *rule* of obligation. The truth is this: the divine reason, in all cases, whether we perceive it or not, must be considered the rule according to which God acts in issuing his commands, but cannot be to us (except so far as we may perceive it to correspond with the divine command) either the *ground* of our obligation or the *rule* of our duty.

Look at the havoc in the system of morals which would result from making the divine *reason* instead of the divine *will* the *ground* of obligation. How can the puny reason of finite creatures grasp the infinite reasons that control the mind of God! In many cases, the reasons of his commands are hidden from our view; and where a glimpse of these reasons may be gained, who can estimate the vast expanse of this boundless ocean that lies quite unexplored and beyond our reach? And what controversy, what wrangling discussion, what uncertainty, what clouds and darkness, would at once be introduced, and thrown around the whole subject of morals, if, in order to reach the *ground* of our obligations, we be taught to go beyond the plain command of God, and vainly essay to fathom the depths of the Infinite Mind!

To illustrate the inconvenience and confusion that would result from making the *divine reason* the ground of obligation, we quote the following: "In the divine reason must be found the *ground of all moral obligation.* And as the human reason is the outbirth and image of the divine, so its affirmations are the highest authority to man. *The voice of conscience is the voice of God!* There can be no higher authority in morals. It speaks more immediately and directly to the human heart than the voice of any prophet or seer. The necessary affirmations of the moral faculty are assumed as the reason of obligation. When the particular relation, in view of which a particular duty is affirmed, is apprehended, all the reason that can be assigned has been given why that duty is binding upon us. *We have then discovered the only real and ultimate foundation of all obligation.*" Methodist Quarterly Review, Jan., 1864, p. 28.

In the above extract are found some things "hard to be understood,"

concerning which we offer the following remarks: According to the extract given, as there are many duties the *divine reasons* of which are utterly beyond our reach in such cases, how can we gain a knowledge of the *ground of obligation?* And *not knowing* the ground of the obligation, how can we know that *the obligation exists?* And *not knowing* that it exists, how can we *feel its weight?* And not feeling its weight, how can we *be expected to comply with it?* What was the ground of Adam's obligation to obey the command, not to eat of the fruit of "the tree of knowledge"? Did *he* know the "divine reasons" why the fruit of that particular tree was interdicted? If so, how did he gain that knowledge? Did God explain to him the reason, or did the "moral sense" teach it. It will not do to say that the annexed penalty was the reason on which the command was grounded; for that would imply that God desired to inflict the penalty, and only issued the command as a pretext for carrying out this primary desire. Besides, the penalty was annexed, not to explain "*divine reasons*" *for the command*, but to *enforce obedience to it.* If Adam ever gained a knowledge of the *ground* of his obligations to obey that command, except the fact that God had given the command, we have never read of it. And if any of his sons after him have traveled back into the secret counsels of God, so as to ascertain what were "the divine reasons" that dictated to the Divine Mind the special interdiction of the fruit of that particular tree, we hope they will come forth and enlighten us. If the first great test-command was not given under circumstances calculated to teach that the manifested will of God is *the ground, and the sufficient ground, of moral obligation,* then we cannot comprehend the subject.

Again, the writer under review says: "The affirmations of human reason are the highest authority to man." Surely not the affirmations of *fallen, benighted, erring* human reason! If this poor *fallible* reason is *higher* "authority to man" than the *infallible* word of God, then why denounce the infidelity of France for dragging *the Bible* through the streets of Paris at the tail of an ass, and exalting *reason* to divine honors?

But the author says: "*The voice of conscience is the voice of God!*" Here is eloquence, but is it truth? Surely, it cannot be that the voice of a depraved, perverted, uninformed, "evil," or "seared" conscience, "*is the voice of God*"! Nor can it be that the "voice of conscience," *generally*, "is the voice of God;" for men's consciences *generally* are evil. Was the voice of Saul's conscience "the voice of God," while he was persecuting the Church and yet living "in all good conscience before God"? Acts xxiii. 1.

15. While "the voice of conscience" is admitted to be *fallible*, and

the revealed will of God *infallible*, it cannot in truth be asserted that "there can be no higher authority in morals" than "the voice of conscience." While it is true that we cannot violate conscience without contracting guilt, it is not true that because we do not violate conscience we are therefore necessarily innocent.

Moral philosophy, as defined by Dr. Paley, is "the science which teaches men their duty, and the reasons for it." It is more briefly defined in the "New American Cyclopedia" as "the science of duty."

II. Our first inquiry on the subject is this: *Is* RECTITUDE *an essential, inherent quality in actions, or is it the creature of adventitious circumstances?* In other words, on what does the distinction between *right* and *wrong* depend? Whence does it originate? Those who have not deemed it necessary to found their theories concerning morals on the Bible have diverged greatly from each other in their speculations upon this question.

1. Among the various theories concerning rectitude advocated by such as did not concern themselves about the teachings of revelation, the first we shall notice is this: that *any thing is right or wrong only as it happens to be sanctioned or condemned by the customs or laws of any particular country or community in any particular age or part of the world.*

As will be readily perceived, this theory assumes that rectitude possesses in itself no real, inherent, essential attributes, but depends entirely upon extraneous, adventitious circumstances, not only for its characteristics, but also for its existence—that is, it is nothing in and of itself; but if you choose to decree its existence, then it shall be; and whatever attributes you choose to confer upon it, those it shall possess.

Perhaps the most prominent advocate of this theory among modern philosophers was Hobbes. And, like most of the principles of skeptical philosophy, it need only to be tried at the tribunal of common sense to render its absurdity manifest. The first question here involved has nothing to do with the foundation of moral rectitude. It does not inquire *why* one thing is *right* and another *wrong*. It does not ask for the origin, ground, or cause of this distinction; but merely asks: Does it exist? Is rectitude an essential, substantive quality in itself? Are *right* and *wrong* things possessing essential, absolute existence, or are they merely idealities which may or may not be conjured up, and indued with any imaginary shape or qualities which fancy or prejudice may see fit to dictate? However consonant this theory which denies the essential existence of rectitude, and consequently all real distinction between virtue and vice, or moral good and evil, may be with that in-

fidel philosophy in whose necessitarian nest it has been hatched, or with certain schools of theology by whose dogmas it has been nurtured, yet it is easy to show that it is repugnant to the dictates of common sense.

Rectitude is no more dependent on conventional arrangement for its existence than are any of those qualities that may pertain to physical substances. It is true that some things are in themselves indifferent, and become right or wrong only as they may be enjoined or prohibited by law. Thus it is right to pay a certain amount of tax at a stipulated time, and wrong to omit it, because the law of the land has enjoined it. It was wrong for our first parents to "eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil," because God had forbidden it. These are *positive* precepts, relating to things indifferent in themselves, which only become right or wrong as they may be commanded or prohibited by the power having authority to act in the premises. But it is equally clear, from the dictates of common sense, that there are other things, right or wrong in themselves, independent of all positive enactment or conventional arrangement of any kind whatever.

It would be as unphilosophical to say that nothing can be straight or crooked until measured by a rule, or sweet or sour until tasted, as that nothing can be right or wrong until so rendered by custom, law, or conventional agreement. As sweet and sour, straight and crooked, denote abstract qualities, having a real existence, independent of the physical substances to which they may be attached; so right and wrong, good and bad, denote abstract principles, having a real existence in themselves, independent of all internal emotion or external action to which they may be applied; hence we conclude that rectitude is an abstract principle, eternal and immutable as the attributes of God. Indeed, it is a principle inhering in, and essentially pertaining to, the divine nature.

If, then, rectitude be an essential quality, eternally existing, it cannot derive its being solely from the command or will of God. Were this the case, then what is now right would be wrong, and what is now wrong would be right, had God so commaded. Common sense revolts at such consequences, and utters her voice against the truth of any system from which they result. It is true, what God wills or commands must be *right*, and to suppose that he should command what is wrong is to suppose an absolute impossibility. God can no more command what is wrong than he can change his nature, or cease to be God. But the theory, which teaches that rectitude results solely from the command of God, assumes that theft, murder, and vice, are only worse than honesty, benevolence, and virtue, because God has commanded

the latter and forbidden the former; in a word, it destroys the essential distinction between virtue and vice. Surely a system fraught with consequences so revolting and absurd never can gain the sanction of common sense.

Nor is it any better to say that rectitude depends upon *the arbitrary constitution of the human mind.* Whether *this* refers to what is styled the "*moral sense,*" or to the sense of *approbation* or *disapprobation* arising from the contemplation of actions, or to an internal *emotion of sympathy,* it matters not. It is clear that this constitution of the mind has been conferred upon us, as it is, by the Creator; and if so, it might have been different from what it is, and that which is now virtue might have been vice, and that which is now vice might have been virtue. Thus this theory of founding rectitude upon any thing pertaining to the constitution of the mind destroys the essential distinction between right and wrong, virtue and vice.

It matters not whether, with Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, we found rectitude upon the "*moral sense,*" or, with Adam Smith, upon *sympathy,* or, with Dr. Brown, upon the *emotion of approbation or disapprobation*—it is clear that this theory, in either of the three phases specified, denies that rectitude possesses any essential quality, or that there is any real, essential, or original difference between virtue and vice. Indeed, these theories all, in this particular, harmonize with that of Hobbes, already considered. The only difference is this—while Hobbes founds rectitude, and all distinction between virtue and vice, upon custom or law, as they may exist in different countries; Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, Adam Smith and Dr. Brown, found them upon the constitution of the human mind.

These theories not only deny that rectitude denotes any actual quality in actions, or that there is any real distinction between right and wrong, but they all alike fail even to furnish any definite *criterion* of rectitude. According to Hobbes, theft, infanticide, and parricide, are right or wrong according as they are sanctioned or condemned by the *customs* and *laws* of different countries. According to Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, things are right or wrong according as they may be pronounced upon by the *moral sense* of each individual. According to Adam Smith, things are right or wrong according as they may excite, or fail to excite, the sympathies of those who contemplate them. But, agreeably to Dr. Brown's theory, things are right and wrong according as they excite in him who contemplates them the emotion of approbation or disapprobation. Where, we ask, can be found in any of these theories a fixed criterion of rectitude? As the customs or

laws of the country may make theft a virtue in Sparta and a crime in England or the United States, so the moral sense—the sympathies, or the emotions of approbation or disapprobation, as they may be manifested in different minds—may vary; and thus, what is virtue with one may be vice with another. So it is plain that we have in these systems, not only no foundation, but no fixed criterion for rectitude, or for the distinction between right and wrong. Can any rational mind believe that the principles lying at the foundation of all morals are thus fitful and uncertain? Can it be that there are no principles of rectitude the same at all times and in all places? Is it not one of the plainest dictates of common sense that right and wrong are principles eternal and immutable as the attributes of God himself?

III. Having therefore settled it in our minds that *rectitude* denotes an inherent, actual quality of actions, or that *right* and *wrong* possess an absolute existence, and are not the mere creatures of circumstances; the next inquiry naturally presenting itself on this subject is this: WHAT IS THE GROUND OR FOUNDATION OF MORAL OBLIGATION?

We have already shown that some things are essentially right and other things essentially wrong, but a knowledge of this fact will avail us but little in morals, unless it be shown that we are under obligations to do those things which are right, and to abstain from doing those things which are wrong. It no more follows, necessarily, that because an action is right I am on that account alone bound to perform it, than that because an apple is sweet I am under obligations to eat it There must be some ground of the obligation beyond the mere quality of the action obliging me to perform it. Admitting that one thing is right and another thing wrong, *why* may I not do wrong instead of right, just as I may fancy or choose, without incurring guilt? We do not now inquire for any *rule* or *standard* of right and wrong, but merely for the *obligation* binding us to do the one and refrain from the other.

On this question various theories have been advocated, some of the most prominent of which we will briefly notice.

On this question much abstract and useless speculation has been employed. For instance, the systems here adopted have been ranged in two classes: the *subjective* embracing those theories that found moral obligation on something *within* our own nature, whether it be styled the moral sense, conscience, or the constitution of the human mind; the *objective* implying those theories that found moral obligation on things *external* to us. Under this head are comprised those theories that found moral obligation: 1. On the authority of the State. 2. On something

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in the inherent nature of things. 3. On the greatest happiness, or the benefits resulting from things. 4. On the revealed will of God.

Ignoring any farther reference to the *subjective* and *objective* classification as a useless parade of scholastic terms, we here remark that the theory we believe to be true, and the only one consistent with Christianity, is that which founds moral obligation on *the revealed will of God.* It may be proper, however, here to make a few observations concerning some of the other systems above named.

Hobbes not only founded rectitude itself upon custom or law, but, as a necessary consequence, he founded moral obligation upon the same thing. The absurdity of his theory has already been shown.

Dr. Samuel Clarke, following Grotius, considered moral obligation as founded on *the fitness of things.* This theory has two capital objections: First, it fails to furnish, what is most of all material in the case, the reason *why* we are under obligation to act according to the fitness of things; but, secondly, admitting the existence of the obligation, it leaves the rule or criterion of duty perfectly unsettled. For, as every man is left to be his own judge as to the fitness of things, it is clear that there would be about the same variety of judgment upon this subject that exists in the features of the human countenance; and thus every man would be left quite out at sea as to any fixed rule of right and wrong.

To found moral obligation, with Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, upon the moral sense, is liable to the same objections with the scheme of Grotius and Dr. Samuel Clarke. It sets forth no satisfactory reason, showing *why* we are under obligation to follow the dictates of the moral sense, and, even if this could be shown, it is plain that this moral sense, or inward perception of right and wrong, in regard to many things, is very much the creature of education and of circumstances. It is about as variant in different countries and among different people as the climate and soil pertaining to their respective localities. What this moral sense may accredit as the highest virtue with the Hindoo widow, may be viewed with the deepest abhorrence throughout Christian lands.

Besides, this whole scheme is palpably contradictory to the teachings of St. Paul. This apostle, in defending himself before the Jewish high-priest, Ananias, declares, "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." It is plain, then, that he had not come in conflict with the moral sense within him while he was persecuting the Christians. And in his defense before Agrippa, the apostle says, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Was Saul of

Tarsus doing *right*, we ask, while he was persecuting the Church of God? He styles himself "the chief of sinners," and says that he had been a "blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious;" and he adds, "but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." Now, we ask, how could he have needed mercy, unless he had violated his obligations? And if, while living "in all good conscience before God," or according to the teachings of the moral sense within him, he had violated his obligations, how could that moral sense be either the ground or the criterion of his obligations?

The plain truth is this: that Saul was sinning, or violating his obligations, while he was persecuting the Church; but his sin consisted not in the fact that he was acting according to his conscience at the time, but that he had previously, through prejudice and passion, neglected to inform his conscience. But still, as he violated his obligations, while he did not violate his conscience or the moral sense, it necessarily follows that the moral sense cannot be the ground of moral obligation. Although we ought in no case to violate our consciences, yet, as we are often culpable for not correcting our consciences when they are wrong, these consciences cannot be the primary ground of obligation. We must look for something anterior and superior to the moral sense, and more authoritative, as the ground of moral obligation.

If, with Wollaston, we attempt to found moral obligation on "the truth of things;" with Wayland, on "the relations of things;" or with President Edwards, on "the love of being in general;" all these theories are liable to the same objections with those we have considered. They must vary, as do the judgments and tastes of individuals, and of course can furnish no fixed *criterion* of obligation; and, being destitute of *authority*, they can furnish no *ground* of obligation.

Take the theory of Paley, that "virtue is the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, for the sake of everlasting happiness," and it is plain that he makes "everlasting happiness" the motive of virtue. One of the very serious objections to this theory is, that it founds obligation on a principle of selfishness, excluding from virtuous actions all deeds of benevolence. But were it freed from this objection, still it furnishes no reason *why* we are *obliged* to seek after "everlasting happiness."

Bentham founded moral obligation on "utility, or the greatest good of the greatest number." But it is irksome, as it is useless, to perplex our minds with the theories and speculations of the many reputable authors who have written on this subject. Were these authors only pagan philosophers, feeling their way in the dark in their search for truth, the

matter would not be surprising; but that learned divines should delight so much to bewilder themselves amid the speculations of mere natural reason, when the superior, the infallible, light of revelation was shining around them, is unaccountably strange.

When once we are ready to forget these theoretic speculations on the subject in hand, and pass directly to the inspired word, how forcibly does the truth flash upon the mind, that "*moral obligation is founded on the revealed will of God*"!

Were there no other proof upon this subject than the preface to the Decalogue, in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, that were enough. "And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Here, as the ground on which this law is issued and obedience to its precepts enjoined, we have directly specified the relation God sustains to his creatures. First, he is "the Lord" (or Jehovah)—this implies that he is the supreme Ruler of the universe; and next, "thy God"—this implies that he is the Creator of man, the Author and Preserver of his being. "Which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage"—this specifies the blessings of his special providence. No one can fail to perceive how expressly the relation God sustains to us is here set forth as the *ground* of our obligation to obedience.

And it must be obvious to every Bible-reader that this accords with the general tenor of Scripture. Samuel said to the people of Israel, "Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you." 1 Sam. xxii. 24.

That, according to the gospel scheme of morals, obligation grows out of our relation to God, is explicitly taught by St. Paul. He says: "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; *therefore* glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." The conclusion from these passages from the prophet and from the apostle is, that as God "hath done great things for us"—that is, in our creation, preservation, and redemption—and as we have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, *therefore* we are under obligations to "serve him in truth, with all our heart," and to "glorify him in our body and in our spirit, which are God's." Hence, moral obligation grows out of our relation to God; and as this relation to God can only be understood by us from his revealed will, we must rely upon that will as furnishing both the *ground* and the *criterion* of our obligations. In other words, the revelation of God teaches us "our duty, and the reasons for it."

If we be asked *why* we are under obligations to perform any partic-

ular moral duty, our reply is, that it is according to *the revealed will of God.* But if we be farther interrogated *why* we are bound to act according to the revealed will of God, our reply is, because of *our relation to God*—that is, he is our Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer. We are dependent upon him for our being and all our blessings; and nothing can be plainer or more natural and reasonable than his right to command us, and our obligations to render obedience are a necessary sequence.

Whether we trace our obligations to the *revealed will of God* or to *our relations to God* is perfectly immaterial—they both amount substantially to the same thing. These obligations rest immediately on God's revealed will. Whatever he commands, we are at once bound to obey. And if it be demanded *why* we are bound to obey God's revealed will; the reply is, because of our relation to God. It is our relation to God, as his dependent creatures, that *obliges* us to regard his revealed will as our authoritative law.

That the Scriptures themselves abundantly set forth the revealed will of God, both as the *ground* of obligation and the *criterion* of rectitude, cannot be disputed. The passages we have already adduced, we think, ought to be sufficient to satisfy every candid mind on the question. If more were necessary, they might be brought from almost any portion of either the Old or the New Testament. When God called Adam to account for his first sin—the partaking of the forbidden fruit—and was about to pronounce sentence upon him for his offense, on what *ground* did he place his guilt? Did he charge him with having disregarded "the fitness of things," with having acted contrary to "the truth of things," with having neglected to act according to "the utility of things," with having failed to consult the "moral sense" or the "sympathies" of his nature, or "the greatest good of the greatest number"? The very mention of any such puerilities would have been degrading to so serious an occasion. God, who understood the *ground* of moral obligation far better than any of the Christian moralists of our day, simply said to Adam: "Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I *commanded* thee that thou shouldst not eat?" Here was the plain ground of his offense. He had violated his *obligation* to obey *God's revealed will.*

Take an illustration from the patriarchal dispensation. When God so signally blessed Abraham, after the trial of his faith in the offering up of Isaac, what was specified as the *ground* on which that blessing was conferred? God said to Abraham: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, *because thou hast obeyed my voice.*" Here

as obedience to God's revealed will, was the ground of the reward, even so that revealed will must have been the ground of the obligation.

As one illustration among thousands that might be adduced under the Mosaic dispensation, we refer to the words of the Prophet Samuel (1 Sam. xv. 22): "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in *obeying the voice of the Lord?* Behold, *to obey* is better than sacrifice." If obedience be thus the crowning virtue, it must be because our obligations are thereby met; and if so, those obligations must be founded on the command.

Let a single text from the New Testament suffice on this subject. Jesus said: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth the will* of my Father which is in heaven." Here the doing of the will of God (of course, the revealed will) is presented as the condition of the heavenly reward; consequently, that *will* must not only be the *criterion of duty*, but *the ground of obligation.*

How plain is this question when once we are ready to leave the philosophical speculations and interminable quibbles and disputations of the schools and study "our duty, and the reasons for it," from the teachings of inspired wisdom! Here, as we approach the word of revelation, the great source of illumination on all spiritual and moral subjects, the fine-spun theories, metaphysical distinctions, and endless disputations, of philosophers, are forgotten. They melt away and fade from our vision, like mist before the rising morn; and, under the effulgent beams of revelation, we can read "the whole duty of man," and "the reasons for it," in language so plain that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein." Let Christian divines bring their systems of morals, not from the Academy, the Lyceum, or the Portico, but from divine revelation!

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER II.

QUESTION 1. What is the definition of moral philosophy?

2. What erroneous theory of *rectitude* was advocated by Hobbes?

3. At what tribunal, and how may its absurdity be shown?

4. How is it shown that *rectitude* is an abstract and eternal principle?

5. What absurd consequences are involved in the position that rectitude results *solely* from the command of God?

6. What consequences are involved in the position that rectitude is founded on the constitution of the human mind?

7. What theories on this subject were advocated by Shaftesbury and Hutcheson? By Adam Smith? By Dr Brown?

8. Do they all harmonize with the theory of Hobbes? Wherein?

9. What two essential things do all these theories fail to furnish?

10. Because an action is *right*, does it follow from that consideration alone that we are *bound* to perform it?

11. What theories are presented in reference to the *ground of moral obligation?*

12. What is given as the *true theory?*

13. How is the absurdity of these false theories shown?

14. By what proofs is the true theory sustained?

PART III.—THE MORALS OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK II.—OUR DUTY TO GOD.

CHAPTER III.

LOVE—THE FEAR OF GOD.

HAVING shown that the Bible must be our standard and guide on the subject of morals, we are now prepared to inquire for the outline of our duty as set forth in that volume. On this subject writers on morals have differed in their plans, but they have generally contemplated "the whole duty of man" as embraced in three grand divisions: 1. Our duty to *God*. 2. Our duty to *ourselves*. 3. Our duty to *one another*. The particular classification we may adopt is not important, provided all our duties be embraced, and each be presented in its true light. In the largest acceptation of the terms, our duty to God would cover the entire circle of our obligations; for all our duties *to ourselves* and *to our fellow-creatures* are founded upon the revealed will of God; and, by neglecting any of them, we are rebelling against the divine authority and treating God's commandment with disrespect, and, of course, coming short of "our duty to God." Therefore it is clear that he who performs his whole duty to God, in this broad sense of the word, must also perform his duty to himself and to all other persons.

Nevertheless, as there are some duties which pertain more directly to God alone than others, it may be useful, as a matter of convenience in discussion, to adopt some classification on the subject. And we can conceive of no division of duty which commends itself to us so forcibly as that adopted by our Lord when he enunciated the two great commandments of *love to God* and *love to man* as comprising the entire law.

"On these two commandments," said he, "hang all the law and the prophets." In presenting this grand epitome of the Decalogue, our Saviour was only carrying out and affixing his own sanction to that more ancient division upon the subject which had been so clearly intimated in the original communication of the law at Mount Sinai. The two tables of stone—the first comprising our duty to God, and the second our duty to man—exhibited in a tangible form, more durable than marble, this grand classification of morals. Doubtless the mind of our Saviour adverted to this fact, as he adopted the same division while substantially reïssuing the Mosaic Decalogue in that beautiful and more comprehensive edition set forth in the two great commandments to which we have referred. Therefore we conclude that the entire system of Christian morals is embraced under the grand divisions of—

1. LOVE TO GOD.

2. LOVE TO MAN.

Or the same thing is more largely expressed thus:

1. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

2. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

We need not stop to show how complete, and yet how plain, is this classification! It is too obvious to be controverted, that he who fulfills these two commandments must necessarily not only perform his duty to himself, but he must fully discharge every conceivable obligation of every kind whatever.

We now proceed to consider more particularly—

OUR DUTY TO GOD.

I. The first duty we owe to God is LOVE. Indeed, in the full sense, love comprises all duties; but there is a specific sense in which love may be viewed as separated from other duties. Contemplated in this acceptation, love to God implies—

1. *A due appreciation of the divine perfections.*

That is, we must love him for *what he is in himself.* Having a just conception of the purity and excellence of the divine essence—the harmonious unity of all the divine attributes and their beautiful exhibition of every conceivable phase of goodness—the affections of the soul flow toward God in emotions of approval, admiration, and delight. Thus, the "heart and the flesh crieth out for the living God," saying, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee."

2. As we contemplate the divine goodness, whether exhibited in the

works, the providence, or the redeeming mercy of God, this love assumes the form of *gratitude.*

Our duty of loving God, in the sense of gratitude, is far more than a mere sentimental admiration of the disinterested benevolence of Heaven, as seen in all his works and ways. It implies an inwrought spiritual apprehension of his redeeming, regenerating, adopting, sanctifying, and saving goodness. It is in this profoundly deep and spiritual sense of the phrase that the Psalmist exclaims: "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications;" and St. Paul says: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead;" and St. John declares: "We love him, because he first loved us."

3. Love to God implies unreserved and filial *submission to his authority, and obedience to his commandments.*

The Psalmist uses the term in this sense, when he says: "Great peace have they which love thy law." In the same sense our Saviour uses the term, when he says: "Ye are *my friends*, if ye do whatsoever I command you." And again: "He that hath my commandments, and *keepeth them*, he it is that *loveth* me." And St. John says: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we *love* God and *keep his commandments.* For this is the *love of God*, that we *keep his commandments.*" And St. Paul declares: "*Love* is the fulfilling of the law."

From this clear and scriptural view of the duty of the love of God, as an internal principle of grace imparted by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and absorbing the affections and molding the life, being essential to the "keeping of the law of God," how meager and defective must be the teachings of nature, as a standard of morals; and how important must it appear that we adhere, on this subject, closely to the teachings of the divine word!

II. The second duty, under this head, which we shall notice, is THE FEAR OF GOD. This implies a reverential awe of the Divine Majesty, and a dread of displeasing a Being of so holy and excellent a character; and is entirely distinct from that servile, tormenting emotion, which the guilty, unrenewed heart may feel, resulting from the apprehension of punishment for sins committed. It is a filial, tender, and respectful emotion, fitly illustrated by that lovely regard which an affectionate, dutiful child may feel for a worthy parent, causing it to be ever watchful lest it should displease that parent—not from any punishment to itself apprehended as the result, but from a sense of the wickedness of the act of offending one so much admired and loved, and on whom it is so greatly dependent.

This duty is inculcated in the following scriptures. "The *fear* of the Lord is to hate evil." Prov. viii. 13. "The *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Ps. cxi. 10. "*Fear* God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12. 13. "His mercy is on them that *fear* him." Luke i. 50. "Then they that *feared* the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that *feared* the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Malachi iii 16. "*Fear* God, and give glory to him." Rev. xiv. 7.

There are various other duties to God pertaining to the internal disposition and emotions of the heart, such as *fidelity*, *trust*, *faith*, etc.; but as these have been considered in connection with the *doctrines* of Christianity, we will not here bring up the same topics again. There are yet, however, some duties, under the general head we are now investigating, of a more *external* character, to which we will call attention in the following chapters.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER III.

QUESTION 1. In what divisions have writers generally embraced our whole duty?

2 What is important in reference to these divisions?

3 What is the classification on this subject adopted?

4. What is our *first* duty to God?

5. What is its *first* element, and what does it imply? What are its *second* and *third*, and what do they imply?

6 What is implied in the "fear of God," and what scriptures enjoin it?

CHAPTER IV.

PRAYER—ITS NATURE AND PROPRIETY.

THIS duty, though generally classed as *external*, in contradistinction from others more wholly *internal*, is really both *external* and *internal*. As, on the one hand, it is an outward form or external act, so, on the other hand, it is an internal emotion or exercise of the soul. Prayer has been well defined as the "offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to his will, in the name or through the mediation of Jesus Christ, by the help of the Holy Spirit, with a confession of our sins, and a thankful acknowledgment of his mercies."

The leading thought in this definition has been beautifully expressed by the poet, in the following lines:

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh—
The falling of a tear—
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near."

Prayer, when offered vocally, or in the form of words, is styled an *external* duty; but even then, unless the proper emotion of the heart accompany the utterance of the language, the most essential element of prayer will be wanting.

I. Before we proceed to the scriptural presentation of this subject, in its different phases, we call attention to THE REASON AND PROPRIETY OF THIS DUTY.

The first, and, with the believer in revelation, the great and all-sufficient reason for this duty is, that *God has commanded it.* Were we unable to perceive a single ground of propriety in it beyond the mere command of God, that fact alone, with all who acknowledge the truth of revelation, would place the obligation of this duty on as firm a basis

as that of any other duty whatever; yet, to skeptical minds, it may be useful, so far as our reason can penetrate, to offer some remarks concerning the propriety of prayer, as intimated by the light of nature.

1. In the first place, it tends to preserve vividly in the mind a recollection of the attributes and general superintendency of God. He who seriously offers prayer to God, must necessarily remember, not only that there is a God, but that he possesses omnipresence, enabling him to hear prayer at all times and places, and omniscience, omnipotence, and infinite goodness, so that he has the wisdom, the power, and the disposition, to answer prayer.

2. The tendency of habitual prayer must be, to divest the mind of that pernicious and infidel notion of confiding alone in secondary causes. It not only contributes to impress us with a sense of our wants and necessities, and our native imbecility and utter inability to help ourselves, but it ever reminds us that He who made the world has not withdrawn his constant care and attention from the production of his creative hand, but that his sustaining and controlling influence is diffused abroad throughout all parts of his creation.

3. Some have attempted to ground the reason and propriety of prayer upon the moral preparation and fitness it is supposed to produce for the reception of the blessings we ask. If by this it be understood that prayer is either the effective instrument or the active agent in producing in the heart that sincere penitence and faith which prepare us for the reception of divine grace in justification, regeneration, and sanctification, or in that salvation which the gospel proposes—if *this* be the sense of the position, it is not only unscriptural, but involves several absurdities.

It is *unscriptural*, because repentance, faith, and salvation, are everywhere in Scripture represented, not as being produced by prayer, or any other act of the creature, but by the agency of the Divine Spirit—"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." According to the whole tenor and scope of Scripture, the entire work of salvation, from beginning to end, embracing conviction, conversion, justification, remission of sins, adoption, and sanctification, is of God, and not of ourselves; and all this is effected through the efficient agency of the Holy Spirit, and on the ground of the atoning merits of Christ. Hence, to attribute this influence to prayer, or to the performance of any other Christian duty, however important that duty may be, is to subvert the entire gospel scheme as so fully set forth in the Scripture.

Prayer is a *condition* enjoined upon us in Scripture, upon the performance of which God has promised to confer upon us certain bles-

ings; but it is not, in the proper sense, either the instrument through which, or the agent by which, those blessings are conferred. Neither the blessing of salvation, in its several stages of conviction, regeneration, etc., nor that humility, penitence, and faith, in which a *preparation* for the reception of those blessings consists, is conferred by the instrumentality or efficient agency of prayer.

To attribute the blessings in question to the efficacy of prayer, is not only contrary to Scripture, as we have shown, but the theory involves *absurdity* in itself.

First, it must be admitted that prayer—in order to be acceptable to God, and to render it what it must be, as a condition, on the performance of which God has promised the blessings of salvation—must be offered in penitence and faith. Now, to suppose that this penitence and faith—an essential element of acceptable prayer—result from the act of praying, is absurd. This would imply that we must first possess penitence and faith before we can use the instrument through whose efficacy we gain that possession—which is a palpable contradiction.

But if it be absurd to suppose that we gain a *preparation* for salvation by the efficacy of prayer, it must be doubly absurd to suppose that we gain salvation itself by that efficacy. Indeed, the theory we here oppose is inconsistent with the very nature of prayer. What is prayer but the offering up by the heart of a petition to God for blessings which we feel that we need, and which we desire him to confer upon us? And *how*, we demand, can we ask God to bestow upon us those blessings which we expect efficaciously to result from the mere act of asking? If the act of asking works out the blessing, then the idea that the blessing is conferred in answer to the petition is an absurdity, for, according to the theory, the *act* of praying effectually works out its own answer; and, so far as we can see, this result, according to the theory in question, would be just as effectually reached on the supposition that God did not hear the petition at all. Surely a position so repugnant to Scripture, and so fraught with absurdity, is not to be sanctioned.

We have been the more particular in noticing this theory, because of the manifest favor it has received in certain quarters, and of our conviction of its pernicious tendency. It saps the foundation of all experimental, spiritual influence. Its tendency is to deny the direct agency of the Spirit, and put God out of the world; under the pretense of exalting the duty of prayer to a position of superior importance and influence, it, in reality, renders it an absurdity, and deprives it of all its efficacy.

When we contemplate prayer as a mere *condition* enjoined by the

appointment of God, upon the performing of which he has promised to confer his blessings, its importance and advantages result, not from the fact that it is supposed to possess inherent virtue or direct efficacy conferring, by the mere act of praying, the blessings desired, but from the fact that it looks to a higher Power for assistance, and complies with a condition in connection with the performance of which that assistance has been promised. While prayer, in itself, possesses no inherent virtue or efficacy, yet, by the divine appointment, it is a condition which connects with itself the efficient agency of the Holy Spirit. Thus it is that the prayer of faith can "move the hand that moves the world."

On the other hand, if, in accordance with the position we have been opposing, the influence of prayer is only to be found in its operation upon the internal principles and emotions of the suppliant, then it follows that, as we rely on this inherent efficacy resulting from the act of praying for the conferring of the blessings desired, of course, we cannot look to God for the impartation of those blessings by the direct agency of his Holy Spirit. Thus, according to this view, the suppliant is working a practical deception upon himself. While, *in words*, asking God to give him a new heart—to give him faith, hope, charity, humility, peace, joy, etc.—(as though he supposed that God was listening to his voice, and would exert a direct agency in answering his petitions), he is *really* only looking for that new heart, faith, hope, charity, humility, peace, joy, etc., to spring up within him while praying—not as the result of any direct agency of the Holy Spirit, but as the natural effect of the mere exercise of prayer itself.

A man on his knees before God, with these views of the efficacy of prayer, resembles one out upon the water in a boat, with one end of a cable in his hand and the other fastened to the shore. While pulling the cable, he may fancy he is causing the distant shore to approach *him*, but, in reality, *he* is approaching the shore, while *it* remains stationary. Just so, agreeably to this theory, the suppliant, while beseeching God to draw near by his Spirit and bless him as he needs, may imagine that God is hearing and directly answering his prayer; but it is only an illusion: *he* is drawing nearer to God; and, by the mere act of praying for these blessings, they naturally spring up in his soul. If this view does not render prayer a senseless and solemn mockery, it divests it of its scriptural vitality and power.

The absurdity of the theory under review appears, farther, from the fact that we may pray for many blessings which, from their nature, cannot result from the mere internal efficacy of prayer itself. Thus, we ask for the pardon of sin, which is an act of God which he alone

can perform. We ask for our daily food and raiment, for deliverance from danger and affliction, and for a thousand things which the mere act of praying cannot confer. It is true, the act of praying must exert a beneficial influence on the heart; but that *this* constitutes the ground on which the propriety of this duty rests, or that it is thus alone that answer to prayer is to be expected, is a position manifestly unscriptural, absurd, and injurious.

II. We now notice some of the OBJECTIONS to prayer.

1. An objection to this duty has been founded upon the doctrine of *predestination.*

It is alleged that, "if all things have been predestinated and foreordained from all eternity, in so absolute and unconditional a sense that nothing can take place differently from what it does, then there can be no propriety in prayer, since nothing can be effected thereby." We have never seen a consistent answer to this objection without a denial of the doctrine on which it is based; nor do we think it possible, in any other way, to meet it with a satisfactory answer. But, as the doctrine of predestination has been amply considered in our discussion of the "Doctrines of Christianity," we deem it unnecessary to add any thing farther on the subject in this place. As the Calvinistic view of predestination has been abundantly refuted, the objection in hand of course falls with it.

2. Another objection to prayer is founded on the fact that "God is infinitely wise and good." It is argued that, "therefore, he will bestow upon us every thing proper for us to possess, without prayer; and that what is not proper for us to possess, he will not give in answer to prayer."

To this it may be replied, that, because God is infinitely wise and good, he may therefore see that it would be proper for him to bestow upon us certain things, in answer to prayer, that it would not be proper for him to bestow, without prayer. Infinite Wisdom and Goodness must take into account all the circumstances bearing upon the case in hand, in order to determine what is fit and proper; and as the character of the individual is a very essential circumstance bearing upon the question as to what is proper to be conferred upon him, and as the fact of his praying or not praying, since God has commanded that duty, may be a very appropriate test of character, it follows that our praying or not praying may properly determine the divine procedure in bestowing or withholding certain blessings.

The principle here involved is beautifully illustrated in the parable of the Talents. The lord of the servants gave to each of the three "according to his several ability." To one he gave five talents, to

another two, and to another one. Now, as the lord of these servants distributed to each "according to his several ability," it is plain that it would have been improper for him to have given *two* talents to the servant to whom he gave *one*, or *five* to him to whom he gave *two*. And why? Because that would have been bestowing upon them more than they were capable of managing; and, consequently, would have involved a waste which the dictates of wisdom would have avoided. And if the fact of one being able to manage more than another renders it proper to bestow more upon one than upon another, for the same reason it will be proper to vary the amount bestowed upon the same servant, according as his circumstances may change, so as to render him capable of managing more at one time, or under one state of circumstances, than at another time, or under a different state of circumstances. The only question, therefore, to be here considered is this: is the fact of one praying, and another not praying, calculated so to change or vary the circumstances of the two, as to render it proper, according to the dictates of wisdom, to bestow upon one what is withheld from the other?

When it is remembered that God has enjoined the duty of prayer, it must be evident that a refusal to perform that duty implies a spirit of direct rebellion against the divine authority. And since God has connected with the performance of this duty the promise of many desirable blessings, and has connected with its neglect the withholding of those blessings, as well as exposure to many evils, it necessarily follows that a refusal or neglect to perform the duty of prayer evinces a "wicked heart of unbelief." Now, is it not plain that the dictates of wisdom would require a different administration toward a rebellious, unbelieving servant, from what would be proper in reference to a submissive and confiding one? Our Saviour said: "Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." To bestow upon a rebellious, wicked, unbelieving sinner, such blessings as would be appropriate for a docile, obedient, and confiding Christian, would be as incongruous and as repugnant to the dictates of wisdom and goodness as to "cast pearls before swine." From all these considerations, it appears that it may be exceedingly proper and consistent with the divine attributes, for God to bestow, in answer to prayer, what he would otherwise withhold.

The form of this objection is sometimes varied thus: "God," it is said, "will do whatever is *best*, whether we pray or not; therefore our praying or not praying cannot affect his administration toward us." When the objection is presented in this form, we cheerfully admit the

premises. To admit that God will do what is *best*, is only to admit that "the Judge of all the earth will do right;" or, in other words, that "God is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind." But what has this admission to do with the conclusion in the objection? This conclusion assumes that it never can be *best* for God to bestow any thing, in answer to prayer, which he would otherwise withhold. It assumes, that what is *best* under one state of circumstances must be *best* under all circumstances. The conclusion, in the objection, is as palpable a *non sequitur* as can be imagined — it does not follow from the premises. The conclusion assumed, in this objection, is what never has been and never can be proved. From the simple position that "God will always do what is *best*," it no more follows that, therefore, he will *not* bestow, in answer to prayer, what he would otherwise withhold, than that he *will*, in answer to prayer, bestow what he would otherwise withhold. Before any conclusion can logically be drawn on either side, it must be shown *what is best* under the circumstances. *That* is the very point in dispute; and it is the point which the objection begs in its own favor, but does not attempt to prove. That it may often be *best* for God to bestow, in answer to prayer, what it would be *best* for him, in the absence of prayer, to withhold, must be obvious, from the considerations offered, in answer to the objection in the form previously given. Indeed, the objection, in the two forms just considered, is substantially identical. The only difference is, that, in the latter form, the word *best* is substituted for the word *proper*, in the former.

In reference to all these objections offered to the duty of prayer, and all others that the ingenuity and wickedness of man can invent, the best answer that can be given is, that *the Bible is true*. They all grow out of the principles of skepticism. Admit that an infinitely holy, wise, and merciful God, has given us a revelation of his will, and that in that revelation the duty of prayer is enjoined, and these frivolous objections are at once scattered to the winds. It is enough that an almighty and all-sufficient, all-merciful and righteous Creator, has commanded his poor, dependent, and helpless creatures, saying, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." That God has commanded the duty, and promised the blessing, is an answer which, with every sincere believer, shall silence every cavil and remove every doubt; and, with the most unshaken confidence, relying on the truth of God's word, his language will be: "Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice; have mercy also upon me, and answer me. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek."

All difficulty which may arise in the mind in relation to the propriety of prayer, should at once give way when it is remembered that this duty originates in the *appointment* of God. It will be admitted that the grace or favor of God, whether it relates to the spiritual blessings of salvation or the temporal mercies of this life, is all free and unmerited. It is not conferred upon us on account of our own deservings, but on the ground of Christ's atoning merits; hence, as God is free to "have mercy on whom he will have mercy," it is also his prerogative to suspend the conferring of that mercy on any condition his own wisdom may select. And as he has appointed the duty of prayer as one of those conditions, this fact alone should not only suppress every murmuring thought against the plans of God, but it should stir every heart with gratitude that the conditions of mercy are rendered so easy, and the burden of Christ so light. What is more natural than for the heart, when burdened with a sense of want, of danger, or of affliction, to cry for help? And how grateful should we be for the assurance that the Lord "heareth the prayer of the righteous"!

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IV.

QUESTION 1. What general definition of *prayer* is given?

2. On what is this duty primarily founded?

3. Does the light of nature intimate the propriety of prayer?

4. What beneficial tendencies of prayer does reason indicate?

5. Does prayer, by its direct efficacy, produce the blessings for which we pray?

6. In what manner does prayer secure the divine blessing?

7. What objections have been offered to prayer?

8. How may they be answered?

9. What is the best answer to all objections on the subject?

CHAPTER V.

PRAYER—SCRIPTURE-VIEW—DIFFERENT KINDS OF PRAYER.

No Christian duty is more explicitly and more fully enjoined in Scripture than that of prayer. On this subject, we here present a few passages from both the Old and the New Testaments.

In the patriarchal age, it is recorded that "Abraham prayed unto God" (Gen. xx. 17), and his prayer was heard. The Prophet Samuel said: "Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will *pray* for you unto the Lord." "And Samuel *cried unto the Lord* for Israel, and the Lord heard him." 1 Sam. vii. 5, 9. Solomon "kneeled down upon his knees," and called upon God in prayer, when he dedicated the temple. "And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy *prayer*, and have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice." 2 Chron. vii. 12.

Elijah *prayed*, and God answered his prayer by fire from heaven. Ezra "fell upon his knees" in prayer before God; and Nehemiah also prayed; and their prayers were answered. David says: "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I *pray*, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice." Ps. lv. 17. Daniel "went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God." Dan. vi. 10.

That this duty is expressly enjoined in the New Testament appears from the following passages: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened." Matt. vii. 7. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always." Luke xxi. 36. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Phil. iv. 6. "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thess. v. 17. "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Luke xviii. 1. St. Paul says: "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." 1 Tim. ii. 8.

Prayer is a part of sacred worship common to all dispensations, and

which was not only hallowed by the example of "prophets and righteous men," but also by that of Christ and his apostles.

In farther discussion of this subject, we will consider, first, the *nature* of prayer; secondly, the *different kinds* of prayer.

I. THE NATURE OF PRAYER.

According to Webster, "prayer," in a general sense, is the act of asking for a favor, and particularly with earnestness. But "in worship," he defines it "as a solemn address to the Supreme Being, consisting of *adoration*, or an expression of our sense of God's glorious perfections, *confession* of our sins, *supplication* for mercy and forgiveness, *intercession* for blessings on others, and *thanksgiving*, or an expression of gratitude, to God for his mercies and benefits."

With this general definition before us, which we deem accurate and explicit, we proceed to inquire for the *elements* of acceptable prayer according to the Scriptures.

1. Prayer should be offered in *humility*. This is an essential branch of Christian virtue, which was so foreign from the minds of heathen philosophers that they had no word which to their minds expressed the idea. The word we use for this virtue, to their minds, implied *meanness* and baseness of mind.

But the Bible is very full upon this subject. It is written: "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord." Prov. xvi. 5. God saith: "Him that hath a *high look* and a *proud heart* will not I suffer." Ps. ci. 5. St. Peter says: "Be clothed with *humility;* for God resisteth the *proud*, and giveth grace to the *humble*." 1 Pet. v. 5. Our Saviour furnished a beautiful illustration of the grace of humility, when he set a little child in the midst of his disciples, saying: "Whosoever, therefore, shall *humble* himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Again, we have another illustration of this subject in the commendation of the prayer of the publican, who "smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you," said Jesus, "this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that *humbleth* himself shall be exalted."

From all these scriptures, it appears that an humble spirit is essential to acceptable prayer. And as prayer is the language of dependence and helplessness, crying for mercy in the midst of destitution, want, affliction, or danger, how incongruous must be a proud or haughty spirit in connection with this duty, and how appropriate the feeling of deepest humility!

2. Another element of acceptable prayer is *submission*, or resignation

to the divine will, and a cheerful acquiescence in God's plan of imparting his blessings.

In all our prayers, it is either expressed or implied that we ask for things according to the will of God, otherwise our petitions will not be regarded. A beggar at the feet of his sovereign should not assume the attitude of a dictator. In regard to the spiritual blessings of salvation, the provisions and promises of the gospel are unrestricted and universal "All men everywhere" may pray for "all spiritual benediction and grace." And, in this sense, we may intercede "for all men."

St. Paul has very forcibly portrayed this fullness of spiritual grace. "For this cause," he says, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." What stronger language can be used to express the largest possible communication of heavenly grace! But lest something beyond what is here expressed might be attainable, and to show that there should be no limit to the aspiration of the Christian for spiritual blessings, the apostle adds: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end." Here, to the extent of the grace for which the apostle prays, there is no limit, not even the power of words to express, nor of thought to conceive, can bound his capacious desire. And if the apostle would pray for these unutterable blessings upon his brethren, it is plainly inferable that they should pray for the same things in their own behalf.

Of similar import are our Saviour's encouraging words to his disciples: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." John xvi. 23, 24.

Other scriptures, to the same effect, might be adduced, but these are sufficient to show that there should be no limit to the extent of our petitions for spiritual blessings. Yet we should ever remember that we are to ask for all these things only in consistency with God's prescribed method of bestowing them—that is, we may not ask God to change his

plan, devised in infinite wisdom and goodness, for our individual accommodation. And he has promised these blessings only to him who seeks them aright.

The case is different when we pray for *temporal mercies.* Here God has made no unrestricted promise to grant us whatever we may think we need. And we have authority for praying for such blessings only in submission to the divine will. It is true, God has promised that 'no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly," and the apostle assures us that "all things work together for good to them that love God." But it must not be forgotten that the divine will, and not our own short-sighted wisdom, is to be the judge in the case. God only (and not we ourselves) knows what is really "good" for us. We may ask for riches, health, prosperity, and peace, but God may see that poverty, affliction, adversity, and persecution, would be really better for us. Therefore, in all our petitions for temporal benefits, our prayers should be conditioned and circumscribed by calm and implicit submission to the will of God.

3. *Faith* is an important element of acceptable prayer. St. Paul has declared: "Whatsover is not of *faith* is sin." Rom. xiv. 23. Our Saviour has promised, saying: "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matt. xxi. 22. St. James says: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." James i. 5, 6. Again, St Paul says: "But without *faith* it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must *believe* that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Heb. xi. 6. These scriptures abundantly establish the position that *faith* is an essential element of acceptable prayer. Indeed, this is a point so fully set forth in the word of God that no man, acknowledging the truth of revelation, can for a moment dispute it. To exhibit all the proof upon the subject would be to transcribe a large portion of the Bible.

It may be necessary, however, that we examine more particularly the *elements* of that faith which is thus essential to acceptable prayer. What *kind* and what *degree* of faith does acceptable prayer require?

(1) It must be, to a certain extent, *orthodox in theory.*

This does not imply that our views concerning God and religious doctrine must be correct in every *minutia.* We may embrace many errors in our system of religious belief, and yet hold the essential truths: yet there are some truths radical in their nature, without a belief in

which we cannot consistently pray for either temporal or spiritual mercies either for ourselves or in the behalf of others.

Among the most important of this class of truths is the doctrine of *divine influence*. If *this* be either discarded or explained away, there can be no more sense or propriety in offering prayer to God than if no such being existed. A semi-infidel doctrine has long had place in the world, the tendency of which is to put God, as it were, out of the world which his hand has created, and leave it to its own government and control. Like a vessel on the ocean, cut loose from her moorings, and without a master, "driven by the winds and tossed," so some would persuade us that God created the world, and cast it forth from his hand upon the ocean of time to govern and control itself solely by the agency of *secondary causes*. This pernicious theory has infused its poison into some of our schools of divinity as well as philosophy.

The position to which we refer is this: that God, when he created the material universe, impressed matter with certain properties and powers called "the laws of nature;" and that these laws, operating as secondary causes, govern the material world without any direct or immediate power of the Almighty being exerted or required. This is the *philosophical* phase of the system. When it enters the arena of *theology*, it takes the following shape: It assumes that God miraculously inspired the sacred penmen to write the Scriptures; but that, since the apostolic age, there is no direct or immediate influence of the Holy Spirit on the hearts and minds of men, but that the conversion of men, if effected at all, must be accomplished by the written word, the Spirit of God exercising no agency in the matter whatever, except what arises solely from the fact that the Spirit originally dictated that written word. Thus it is that this system, or rather these twin sisters of semi-infidel philosophy and pseudo-Christianity, would join hands in putting God both out of the natural and of the moral and religious world, leaving the government of the natural world to secondary causes through the laws of nature, and the government of the moral or spiritual world to secondary causes through the written word.

According to the theory just explained, we can conceive no propriety whatever in prayer. The sole utility of prayer arises from the fact that God is supposed to hear and answer our petitions by exerting an influence in bestowing blessings upon us, which he would not bestow without prayer. Deny that he exerts any such influence, admit that all things, both material and immaterial—that is, that the natural things pertaining to this world, and the spiritual things pertaining to religion—are controlled solely by secondary causes, and in what shape can

we look for an answer to our prayers? If God exercises no direct influence over the affairs of this world, either natural or spiritual, how can we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," with any more confidence that we shall obtain that bread than if we were not to pray at all? And if nothing can be gained by prayer, wherein consists its propriety? We can only ask God for temporal mercies on the supposition that he exercises a particular providence over the affairs of this world. Deny *this*, and there would still be reason in our using diligence and industry to secure those blessings, but there could be no reason in our *praying* for them.

Deny that God by his Holy Spirit operates upon our hearts, except indirectly through the word, and how can we pray to him for any spiritual blessing whatever? If there is no direct influence of the Spirit on the heart, how can we pray to God for the *fruit* of the Spirit? We pray to God to impart unto us, or to increase within us, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance." Now these graces, St. Paul tells us, are "the fruit of the Spirit;" but if the Spirit only operates through the written word, how do we expect it to impart or increase the graces in question? *Can* there be given, upon this hypothesis, any sensible meaning to our prayer? Do we expect the Spirit miraculously to multiply Bibles? Even that, according to the theory, it could only do by causing one Bible to produce another. If it be said that these fruits of the Spirit are only produced by the reading and studying of the Bible, then, we demand, in what way does prayer facilitate this process? We pray to God in language as though God were listening, and we expected him to answer our prayers by a direct influence; but if no such influence is to be realized, then the exercise of prayer is worse than silly—it is solemn mockery!

But we demand: What sober-minded man can open his Bible, and read the history of the many prayers of God's people, and the direct answers to them therein recorded, and reconcile the theory we here oppose with the Scripture presentation of the subject? Take but one illustration among hundreds that might be adduced. Our Saviour, in answer to his disciples, who had requested him, saying, "Lord, teach us to pray," among other things, said: "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke xi. 11–13. Now, we undertake to say that if our blessed Lord did not intend to teach his

disciples that their heavenly Father would as really hear, and as directly answer, their prayer, as they would the request of their child asking for bread, then he intentionally deceived them. The language is too pointed and unambiguous to admit of any but one construction. Let it be distinctly noted that the Holy Spirit is not here promised to those who shall read, believe, and obey the Scriptures, however important these duties are admitted to be, but "to them that ask him"—that is, the Holy Spirit is here promised as a gift in direct answer to prayer. To construe the passage otherwise, is not to *interpret*, but to *pervert* the inspired word. And to reconcile with this plain construction of our Saviour's teachings, the doctrine which denies the direct influence of the Spirit of God upon the human heart, is simply an impossibility; hence we conclude that acceptable prayer must be so far orthodox in theory as to recognize *the direct influence of the Holy Spirit on the human heart.*

(2) This faith also implies a *firm trust and reliance upon God*, that through the mediation of Christ he will, according to his promises, bestow upon us the blessings for which we pray. This is implied in the passages already presented; and is so abundantly taught in all those scriptures which exhibit faith as the condition of justification, and of salvation in all its stages, that we deem it useless to dwell upon this point, except to present two or three Scripture-testimonies. When the two blind men came to Jesus, crying, "Thou Son of David have mercy on us," he "touched their eyes, saying, According to your *faith* be it unto you." Matt. ix. 29. Again, Jesus said to one who brought unto him his son who had a dumb spirit: "If thou *canst believe*, all things are possible to him that *believeth*." Mark ix. 23. These passages plainly teach that the answer to prayer is suspended upon the condition of implicit faith. When the Ethiopian eunuch demanded baptism of Philip, the apostle replied: "If thou *believest with all thy heart*, thou mayest." Acts viii. 37. And St. Paul says: "*With the heart* man believeth unto righteousness." Rom. x. 10. Thus it appears that the faith which justifies and saves the soul, and which is necessary to render our prayer acceptable to God, implies the *full trust and confidence of the heart.*

II. We now call attention to the DIFFERENT KINDS OF PRAYER.

The most common division of prayer is into *ejaculatory, private, family*, and *public*. We propose a few remarks upon each separately.

1. *Ejaculatory Prayer.*—This is the impromptu aspiration of the heart, whether silent or expressed, rising to God in emotions of grateful acknowledgment for mercies received, or petitions for blessings

needed. In other words, it denotes that fixed devotional frame by which a constant spirit of prayer is maintained, and an abiding sense of the divine presence and protection preserved. This kind of prayer is clearly enjoined by the apostle in his exhortation to "pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks."

As this abiding spirit of prayer is evidence of genuine piety in the heart, so it conduces largely to the enjoyment of those who maintain it. By habitually staying the soul upon God, it produces a fixed sense of his ever-abiding presence and all-sustaining grace; and thus a calm composure of spirit and a comfortable assurance of the divine protection are secured, and the heart is kept in "perfect peace," being "stayed on the Lord."

2. *Private or Secret Prayer.*—This duty is not only sanctioned by the example of prophets and apostles, and the most pious in all ages, and of Christ himself, but by express precept. Our Lord says, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Matt. vi. 6.

Perhaps there is no Christian duty the strict and habitual performance of which is a surer test of genuine and sincere piety than this. Other religious exercises, even family and public prayer, may be attended to through motives of policy, for the sake of respectability, or to promote the comfort of those about us; but he who habitually bows his knees in secret devotion before God *must* be sincere. And how sublime the spectacle of a poor dependent worm of earth, shut out from the view of every eye but that of God, kneeling in humble pleadings for mercy before the great I Am! Upon such a scene angels must gaze with delight, and God himself looks down from heaven well pleased.

3. *Family Prayer.*—An *objection* has been made to this duty, simply on the ground that it is not expressly enjoined in Scripture. But every honest-minded Christian must admit that what is clearly implied in a great Bible-principle, necessarily growing out of it, is possessed of equal authority with that which is embodied in express precept. To deny this position would introduce fearful confusion and havoc into the system of Christian morals.

Where is the express precept commanding you to clothe your children, to give them as good educational advantages as you can, or to qualify them for some special calling or profession? If it be replied that nature, reason, and the general obligation to "provide for our own household," imply all these duties, may we not, with even more propri-

ety, affirm that nature, reason, and the general obligation to "rule our own house well," and "bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," require us to set before them the example, and favor them with the advantages of family worship?

It is certain that several of the patriarchs, and probable that all of them, adopted household worship. Abraham, Jacob, and Job, offered sacrificial worship in their families; and this is one of the most sacred forms of ancient worship, deriving its obligation doubtless from the appointment of God. Moreover, this duty necessarily grows out of the general injunction on parents to attend strictly to the religious instruction of their children. If a thorough religious instruction necessarily embraces the duty of prayer, which all must admit, if example be an important element of successful instruction, and if precept accompanied by example be more efficient than precept alone, then it follows that the obligation of family prayer is a plain, necessary inference.

That the careful religious training of children was strictly enjoined under both the Mosaic and Christian dispensations, is a position not to be doubted. This is manifest from the divine commendation expressed of Abraham's character in this particular. "I know him," said God, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Gen. xviii. 19. It was explicitly enjoined on the people of Israel by Moses that they should instruct their children in the precepts of religion. "These words," said he, "which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Deut. vi. 6, 7.

The duty of family prayer not only arises as a necessary inference from the general precepts enjoining the religious instruction of children, but it is clearly inferable from the *character* of the Christian and the *constitution* of the family. As a Christian, and as the head of a household, every man is under obligations to do good to the utmost extent of his ability; hence, that we may feel the force of this obligation, it is only necessary that we consider its beneficial tendency. It cannot be denied that family worship tends not only to preserve in the hearts of parents a sense of their obligation to God, and to keep alive the flame of devotion, but it contributes greatly to imbue the minds and hearts of children with religious knowledge and a reverence for holy things. Besides, this constant acknowledgment of God, and our obligations to serve him, secures by promise his gracious regard and pe

culiar favor: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Again, the general promise that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," will apply with peculiar fitness to family devotion. From all these considerations, we conclude that family prayer, though not directly enjoined by express precept, is yet a duty so manifest from the *general principles* of the gospel, the *character* of the Christian, the *constitution* of the family, the *benefits* it imparts, and the *general promises* of God, that it must be of binding obligation on every Christian who is the head of a household.

4. We now call attention to the subject of *public prayer.*

(1) This duty is founded on express precept. Its scriptural obligation is most ample and complete. Our Saviour taught "that men ought always to pray." St. Paul says: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." 1 Tim. ii. 1. That the apostle was here speaking of the public services in the Church the context clearly evinces. He adds: "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." 1 Tim. ii. 8. He proceeds immediately to give instruction concerning the behavior and privileges of women in the Church, which abundantly shows that *public*, and not *private*, devotion was the subject of discourse.

(2) This duty is taught by *plain and necessary inference.* St. Paul says: "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head," etc. 1 Cor. xi. 4, 5. Now, the context makes it manifest that the apostle was here speaking of "praying and prophesying" as a public religious exercise; hence it follows, as a necessary inference, that this duty is obligatory on Christians of both sexes, for the apostle gives directions as to the proper manner of its performance.

(3) Again, this duty is plainly manifest from the Scripture *examples* on the subject. Public prayer was a part of the Jewish service, under the Mosaic economy. That it was regularly performed in the synagogues, at least from the time of Ezra, is unquestionable. And it was sanctioned by our Saviour and his apostles by their frequent attendance upon the synagogue, and participation in the services. And it is undeniable that an important part of this service consisted in public prayer.

(4) The gracious *design* and *benefits* of public worship are obvious and important. It calls the people together, and engages the mind and

heart so as to free them from many snares and temptations to evil to which they would otherwise be exposed. It tends to cultivate a more intimate acquaintance with each other among the members of any given community, and greatly promotes the social virtues. It brings before the mind the contemplation of the sublime themes of pure religion, and elevates the thoughts above the perishing things of earth. It promotes throughout society good order and morality, refinement and virtue.

This public religious worship adapts its benefits to every conceivable case of each individual. It is calculated to impart strength to the weak, light to those who are in darkness, consolation to all who are in distress, and encouragement to those who are dejected; in a word, it preserves a sense of our dependence upon God, and a grateful remembrance of our constant indebtedness to his goodness.

It tends greatly to promote that kindly emotion and fraternal fellowship which are characteristic fruits of the gospel. Here, in the assembly for public prayer, the rich and the poor, the learned and the uncultivated, all classes in society and all conditions in life, may meet together and share the common blessing; here united supplications are offered up to the God and Father of all for national and individual benefits, and many hearts may unite in the undivided strain of thanksgiving and praise to their common Parent and Benefactor; here the Holy Spirit descends, not now "as a rushing, mighty wind," in his miraculous powers, but as the reprover of sin, carrying conviction to the heart of the unbeliever, and as the promised Paraclete, comforting the mourner and causing the saints to rejoice "with joy unspeakable and full of glory;" and here, in an emphatic sense, "the Lord commands the blessing, even life forevermore." From the commencement of the gospel till now, the truly pious have never forgotten the good "word of exhortation," not to "forsake the assembling of themselves together;" and in these assemblies the divine benediction has fallen upon them "as the dew that descended on the mountains of Zion."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER V.

QUESTION 1. What scriptures enjoin the duty of prayer?
2. What is the nature of prayer?
3. What is the first element of acceptable prayer, and by what scriptures is this proved?
4. The second element, and by what scriptures is it proved?
5. What peculiarity should characterize our petitions when we pray for temporal mercies?
6. What scriptures prove that faith is essential to acceptable prayer?
7. In what sense must this faith be orthodox in theory?
8. What scriptures exhibit direct answers to prayer?
9. What scriptures contain promises of direct answers to prayer?
10. What farther element is embraced in evangelical faith?
11. What different *kinds* of prayer are specified?
12. What is implied in *ejaculatory* prayer, and by what scripture is it enjoined?
13. By whose example, and by what scriptures, is *private* prayer enjoined?
14. What objection has been offered to *family* prayer, and how is it answered?
15. How may the propriety of family prayer be proved from Scripture?
16. What scriptures enjoin the duty of public prayer?

CHAPTER VI.

PRAYER—FORM OF PUBLIC WORSHIP.

At least ever since the Lutheran Reformation, there has been much controversy in the Church, *pro* and *con*, as to the propriety of the use of *liturgies* in public worship. Seldom have any written upon this theme without being carried to a partisan extreme, on one side or the other. It is true that the advocates of *liturgical* worship have generally admitted the propriety of extemporaneous prayer, to a limited extent, under certain circumstances—and those opposed to liturgies, as the general rule, have admitted the propriety of using them, to a limited extent, on some special occasions; but still it must be manifest to the impartial observer, if any such can be found, that the disputants on both sides, after having made their admissions, have, as they advanced in the discussion, diverged farther and farther from them — the one party seeming to perceive nothing but evil in the use of liturgies, and the other party seeing only evil resulting from the general plan of extemporaneous prayers. A spirit of bigotry and intolerance has been exhibited on both sides. We are persuaded there is a medium ground on the subject, more consistent with Scripture and with the genius of Christianity than that which has been occupied by either class of the controvertists.

In the first place, it is neither consistent with Scripture, reason, nor Christian charity, to denounce all *liturgical* public worship as necessarily tending to dead formality and the destruction of vital piety in the Church; in the second place, it is neither consistent with Scripture, reason, nor Christian charity, to denounce the regular practice of *extemporaneous* prayer as necessarily tending to produce irreverence, disorder, insubordination, instability, heresy, and enthusiasm, in the Church. Some of these evils may be more likely to spring up in connection with the one plan of worship than the other, but neither plan will secure exemption from any of the evils in question; nor will it, necessarily, produce any of those evils. Whether the question be examined in the light of Scripture, antiquity, reason, common sense, or Christian charity

it will appear that both methods of worship are *right* and *proper;* that the one is preferable on some accounts, and the other on other accounts; and that a judicious blending of the two is better than the exclusive use of either.

I. We examine THE OLD TESTAMENT on this subject.

Here we perceive that the public worship of the Jews was neither wholly *liturgical* nor wholly *extemporaneous* — the two modes were blended.

1. In favor of a *prescribed form* of worship, it may be said that—

(1) Immediately after the passage of the Israelites over the Red Sea, they celebrated their wonderful deliverance in song, which must have been composed for the occasion, and set to music. Moses and the people sang together, and Miriam and her companions responded with the timbrel and the dance, using the chorus: "Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

(2) With the Jewish people, much of their public religious service was very minutely prescribed. The acts they were to perform, and the words they were to use, in various instances, were preärranged and definitely appointed. In the sixth chapter of Numbers, Aaron and his sons were informed what words they were to use in pronouncing a blessing upon the people: "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, . . . On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." At the expiation for uncertain murder, the elders were taught to say over the slain heifer a set form of words, thus: "Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people," etc. Deut. xxi. 7, 8.

(3) At the offering of the first-fruits, the Israelites were taught to return thanks to God in a set form of words, as prescribed in the twenty-sixth chapter of Deuteronomy.

(4) Just before his death, Moses taught the Israelites a song commemorative of God's mercies, requiring them, and their seed after them, to use the same for religious service.

(5) The Jewish rabbis testify that their regular temple service consisted of three parts—viz., sacrifices, liturgical compositions, and psalms. The book of Psalms itself bears internal evidence that it consists, in part, of forms of prayer, of thanksgiving, and praise, for the public worship of God; and that certain Psalms were to be used on specific days, their very titles testify. In the twenty-ninth chapter of Second

Chronicles, Hezekiah the king "commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord, with the words of David and of Asaph the seer; and they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshiped."

(6) Maimonides, a learned rabbi, says: "Ezra composed eighteen forms of prayer, which were enjoined by the great council, that every man might have them in his mouth and be perfect in them, and that thereby the prayers of the rude and ignorant might be as complete as those of a more eloquent tongue." These prayers have all been translated by Dr. Prideaux, and are to be found in his "Connection of Scripture History."

(7) That the synagogue-worship of the Jews was to a great extent liturgical, consisting mainly of forms of prayer and praise, reading the Scriptures and commenting upon the text, is a matter which, we believe, is not disputed. We therefore conclude that *forms* of prayer, to some extent, were divinely authorized in the public worship which God prescribed for the Jewish people.

2. *Extemporaneous Worship.*

(1) Where can we find the evidence that God interdicted, under the Old Testament economy, the use of *extemporaneous* prayer? Although that was peculiarly a dispensation of forms and ceremonies, types and symbols, as compared with the more spiritual worship of the new dispensation, yet, even then, where are prescribed the restrictive statutes? where are the pains and penalties, the disabilities, censures, or excommunications, to be incurred by all who dared to deviate from a prescribed rubric in the public service, either by introducing a psalm not specially designated, or praying extemporaneously (as Justin Martyr says the early Christians did) "according to their ability"?

(2) Again, have we not the most indubitable evidence that prophets and holy men of God, in those olden times, often prayed extemporaneously, both in their private and public services? When Elijah bowed in prayer to God, in the face of all Israel assembled to witness the contest between the true prophet of Jehovah and the false prophet of Baal, he offered up a public prayer that had never been heard before. When Solomon "kneeled down upon his knees," and prayed in presence of the whole nation at the dedication of the temple, he offered up a prayer unknown to any prescribed liturgy. Our conclusion, therefore, from the Old Testament authority, is, that while a liturgical service was evidently sanctioned and to some extent adopted in the Jewish Church, yet there is no evidence that extemporaneous prayers were not allowed. On the contrary, there is clear proof that such

prayers were frequently offered, not only in private, but in public assemblies.

II. We now pass to the examination of THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHINGS ON THIS SUBJECT.

Many have supposed that there is no authority for *forms* of prayer in the New Testament; but this is certainly a wrong conclusion.

1. Were there no other allusion to this subject, it is evident that forms of prayer are right and proper, as appears from the following passage: One of the disciples said unto Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." Here we see that John, the greatest of all the prophets, taught *his* disciples a *form* of prayer. Had this mode of worship been improper, under the gospel dispensation, this was the time and place for our Saviour to communicate that important fact? But did he do it? He did the very opposite. His words are: "When ye pray, *say*, Our Father who art in heaven," etc—prescribing an explicit *form*—teaching them the very words to be used.

Because, according to one of the evangelists, our Saviour said, "After this *manner* therefore pray ye," some have supposed that Christ did not intend to furnish a *form*, but merely an outline *model* of prayer. But this is interpreting Scripture, not according to its plain, unsophisticated import, but merely to uphold a theory. The truth is, he here furnished his disciples a *form*, according to the language of one evangelist, and a *model*, according to another. Both evangelists were right; for he gave both a *form* and a *model*. Hence, as he gave them a *form*, liturgical worship is *right;* and, as he gave a *model*, extemporaneous worship is *right;* so that we here have divine authority for *both modes* of worship, and consequently neither should be interdicted, but every worshiper should be left by the Church in all ages in the enjoyment of all that liberty in the possession of which he was left by our Lord himself.

Again, we have not only *divine precept* for forms of prayer, as just shown, but we have satisfactory evidence that this mode of worship was sanctioned by the *example* of our Lord and his apostles.

That the worship conducted in the Jewish temple and synagogues, at the time of Christ and his apostles, was mainly liturgical, will not be disputed. It is most evident that Christ and his apostles frequently participated in that service. Now, if they had considered that mode of worship improper, would they not have expressed their disapprobation? But He who drove out from the temple "the money-changers," and so frequently and so pointedly reproved the scribes and Pharisees, and rulers of the Jews, for their hypocrisies and various perversions of the Mosaic law, never uttered the first word of censure in reference to

the liturgy of the temple or the synagogues; nor is there to be found in the writings of the apostles any thing expressing disapprobation of that mode of worship.

Add to this the fact that our Saviour was a regular attendant on the Jewish services, that on all the great festival occasions he repaired to Jerusalem to worship, that Sabbath after Sabbath he filled his place in the synagogues, and that his watchful enemies, ever eager to find ground of accusation against him, never charged him with disrespect to the public services of religion. Now, if he had spoken against them, or refused to participate in them, on the ground that portions of those services were liturgical, would they have passed it by in silence? And if he regularly participated in them, without a single expression of disapprobation, did he not affix to that form of worship the seal of his approval? The hymn he sang at the institution of the Holy Supper, and his solemn exclamation on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" were both precomposed forms taken from the Psalms.

The apostles were all brought up in the services of the Jewish religion; and, even after they had established the Christian Church, we find them, as well as many of the first Christians, continuing "daily with one accord in the temple." Acts ii. 46. St. Paul, after his conversion, "prayed in the temple," as he had been accustomed to do; and, a quarter of a century after the crucifixion of our Lord, we find the same apostle going "up to Jerusalem to worship." From all which we conclude that *forms of prayer are authorized by the teachings and example of Christ and his apostles.*

2. But we next inquire, What can be said, from the New Testament testimony, in favor of *extemporaneous* worship? Having seen from the example of Christ and his apostles, as also from the fact that our Saviour taught his disciples a *form* of prayer, that worship performed in a precomposed liturgy is acceptable to God, are we therefore to conclude that *extemporaneous* worship, whether public or private, is either unauthorized or improper? Is there such contrariety between the two modes, that, if the one be authorized and proper, the other must necessarily be without authority and improper? Such has been the hasty conclusion and partisan position of too many. But is it scriptural? Suppose our Saviour did teach his disciples a *form* of prayer, does it thence follow that they are to be restricted to that, or any other, preärranged form?

Are there not numerous examples of acceptable prayer recorded in the New Testament, when no set form was used? Look at the poor publican, smiting upon his breast, and crying, "God be merciful to me

a sinner." Was *he* only repeating what he had memorized from a prayer-book? Look at Peter, crying, "Lord, save me." Look at the two blind men, crying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David." Were all these, and numerous other such examples that might be given precomposed prayers? Were they not rather the impromptu effusion of the heart? Our Saviour promised that the Father would "give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him;" but did he give them a prescribed form of words in which to offer the prayer?

Again, in that longest of our Lord's prayers upon record (John xvii.), from what preärranged liturgy did he derive the form? In that prayer-meeting, held by a hundred and twenty disciples in an upper chamber at Jerusalem, they prayed without a preärranged form (Acts i. 14–24). When Paul instructed Timothy concerning the various classes of persons for whom prayers should be made, though manifestly referring to public worship in the Church, he never hinted that a set form of words should be used (1 Tim. ii.); and in all his remarks concerning the praying of men and women, with their heads *covered* or *uncovered*, he gives no intimation concerning a set formula of words. The whole context shows, not only that these prayers were *public—in the Church*—but that they were *extemporaneous*. Again, in his affecting farewell interview with the Ephesian elders, when Paul "kneeled down and prayed with them all," no rational mind can believe that his prayer was taken from a liturgy.

Now, we demand, Is it not undeniable, from the Scripture-view we have exhibited, that both liturgical and extemporaneous forms of worship are divinely authorized, and *that*, not only in reference to private devotion, but public service? And if so, what is the necessary inference—what is the conclusion, in view of Scripture, reason, expediency, Christian charity, common sense, and every consideration by which the Christian mind should be swayed—but that both modes are right and proper? A judicious combination of the two is better than the exclusive use of either.

But a more important inference from the whole subject is, that as the Scriptures have sanctioned, both by precept and example, both plans of worship, without enjoining either to the exclusion of the other, leaving every Christian in the possession of perfect liberty on the subject, so no Church-authority, whether it be council, convention, conference, synod, or presbytery, may rightfully deprive Christians of that "liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free."

There are attractions in the admirable liturgy of the Church of England which it were an offense against refined taste and genuine piety not

to admit And "our hearts should burn within us, and our kindling faith and swelling joy take wings on high, as, joining in the prayers and praises, the chants and songs, of the Church, we remember that we now worship God in many of the same words that once rung through the carved temple from the fired tongues of David and Isaiah, of Paul and John—in the same strains that were poured forth by the goodly fellowship of the prophets, by the glorious company of the apostles, by the noble army of martyrs, and by the holy apostolic Church throughout all the world."

But much as that or any other liturgy may be admired, and great as may be its excellences, still it is not divinely enjoined; and for any merely human and uninspired body of men, by canon or edict, to render it binding upon the Church to conform to its rubrics, in all their *minutia* and to all the extent of that extended service, and that, too, to the exclusion of extemporaneous prayer, must be considered a usurpation of prerogative. It is separating extemporaneous worship from liturgical, which God hath joined together—it is "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"—it raises an insurmountable obstacle in the way of general Christian union. No Christian organization has the right, especially when claiming to be emphatically THE Church, and urging that all Christians ought to unite in their organization, to require, as an indispensable condition of the proposed fellowship, conformity to a canon which excludes from the general public worship of God either *liturgical* or *extemporaneous* prayer. To do so is, while pleading for union, to adopt most effectual measures to prevent it.

How excellent a grace is charity! and how indispensable its largest exercise to the promotion of that Christian unity for which the Saviour so devoutly prayed! But in no part of religion is charity more essential than in connection with public worship. Here all classes—the clergy and the laity, the learned and the ignorant—should meet on a common level; hence, in this department especially, nothing should be made authoritatively binding in the Church except what is clearly placed on a similar footing in the Scriptures.

In matters depending on mere expediency, the Church may be allowed, in her ecclesiastical regulations, to enjoin many things for the sake of uniformity; but she has no proper authority to require, as an indispensable term of communion, what God has not required. This general principle may be violated, either by requiring more than God has required, or by prohibiting what God has allowed. Thus, for the Church to require, as a term of communion, that we offer our devotions in Latin, would be a usurpation, because it would be requiring more than God

nas required; but for the Church, as a term of communion, to prohibit prayer being offered in English, would be a usurpation, because it would be prohibiting what God has allowed. On the same principle of reasoning, for the Church, as a term of communion, to require that we regularly worship God in the public congregation in the liturgical form only, or exclusively in the extemporaneous form, would be a usurpation, because it would be requiring more than God has required; but for the Church to prohibit, as a term of communion, public worship in the liturgical form, or to prohibit it in the extemporaneous form, would be a usurpation, because it would be prohibiting what God has allowed.

If it be said, in reply to this reasoning, that the Church may require, as a condition of membership in connection with its own denominational organization, more than it would have a right to require as a term of Christian communion—to this we reply, that, by so doing, she admits that she is constituted on principles essentially different from those on which the original Church of Christ was founded, and that, in that respect, her constitution is unscriptural. Farther, whenever we admit that we require, as a condition of membership in our denominational organization, what we could not of right require as a term of Christian communion, we thereby effectually repudiate all claim to be THE Church of Christ, with whose denominational connection it is the duty of all Christians in the land to unite.

It matters not whether it be a particular mode of baptism or a particular form of public service which we require as an essential condition of full membership in our ecclesiastical organization—if it be more than we dare claim as an absolute term of Christian communion, the admission of this fact overturns all the proud claims we might urge as being THE Church with which it is the duty of all to unite. This admission demonstrates that we do not occupy a platform from which we may consistently call upon all others to rally to our standard. It proves that, however illustrious the line through which we may trace our descent, nevertheless we now occupy a *sectarian* basis.

The plain truth on the subject is, that the Scriptures abundantly authorize both the liturgical and the extemporaneous modes of public worship. Both methods have their advantages and their disadvantages. A judicious blending of the two is more in accordance with Scripture, antiquity, and reason, than a rigid adherence to either, to the exclusion of the other. Hence we conclude that, as God has sanctioned both, and left all at liberty to use them at discretion, this liberty cannot be restricted or destroyed without violating the great principles of Christian charity and laying the foundation for schism.

It is to be lamented that some, who are the loudest in their pleadings for that great and glorious unity of "all who profess and call themselves Christians," for which our Saviour so earnestly prayed, are the greatest sticklers for mere modes and forms, and the first to erect effectual barriers in the way of that unity they profess so much to desire. Let these unscriptural principles and practices tending directly to sectarian exclusiveness, whether connected with the *mode* of worship, of baptism, of ordination, or of whatever else, which have so long kept asunder those whom God originally joined together, be at once and forever abandoned, and soon "there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VI.

QUESTION 1. What has characterized the controversy as to the form of prayer?
2. What has been generally admitted on both sides of the question?
3. Which do the Scriptures sanction, *liturgical* or *extemporaneous* worship?
4. Which of these modes of worship did the Jews practice?
5. Which of these modes of worship is sanctioned by the New Testament?
6. Do both Testaments sanction both modes of worship?
7. Can we require as a condition of membership, what the Scriptures do not authorize as a term of communion, without encouraging schism?
8. What are the main advantages and disadvantages of *liturgical* worship?
9. What of *extemporaneous* worship?
10. What would be preferable to the practice of either mode, to the exclusion of the other?
11. What great barrier to Christian union has been erected in connection with this subject?

CHAPTER VII.

THE SABBATH—ITS ORIGIN AND PERPETUITY.

In considering our duty to God, we next call attention to the institution of the SABBATH, or, as styled under the Christian economy, the *Lord's-day.*

Theologians have differed greatly in their views concerning the Sabbath. Some have considered it only a *positive* duty, others a *moral* duty, and others still a *mixed* duty—both *positive* and *moral.* These diversities of sentiment will be considered in our examination of the subject.

I. ORIGIN AND PERPETUITY OF THE SABBATH.

Before we inquire directly concerning the *origin* of the Sabbath, we deem it proper to call attention to the distinction between a *moral* and a *positive* precept. We do this in the language of Bishop Butler, thus: "*Moral* precepts are those, the reasons of which we see; positive precepts are those, the reasons of which we do not see. Moral duties arise out of the nature of the case itself, prior to external command; positive duties do not arise out of the nature of the case, but from external command; nor would they be duties at all, were it not for such command received from Him whose creatures and subjects we are."

1. We maintain the *perpetual obligation* of the Sabbath from the fact that it is properly a *moral,* instead of a *positive* duty. We know that some have contended that this duty depends entirely upon *positive* precepts for its existence, and that therefore, as there is no express precept to that effect, the obligation to observe it cannot be perpetual.

Others have considered the obligations of the Sabbath of a *mixed* nature, depending partly on moral, and partly on positive precepts; but, notwithstanding the great names that have been enrolled in favor of both these positions, we must consider them erroneous. We think they have been taken in haste, and have led to very pernicious results. Had not the admission first been made that the obligation is not *wholly moral,* but of a *mixed* nature—partly moral and partly positive—it is hardly probable that the *perpetuity* of this obligation would ever have

been questioned by such men as Dr. Paley. It is much to be regretted that a work so ably written as this author's "Moral and Political Philosophy," and one so admirably adapted, in many respects, to fill the place it has so generally occupied as a text book in our colleges, is so exceedingly heterodox on the important subject of the Sabbath. We think the two positions, that the obligation of the Sabbath is *not wholly moral*, and that it is *not perpetual*, are connatural, and that Dr. Paley never would have adopted the *latter* but for the general admission of the *former*.

We freely admit that, when the Sabbath became connected with the Mosaic ceremonial law, numerous minute appendages, by specific enactment, were connected with it; but these appendages were merely adventitious — they did not constitute its essence. The Sabbath derived not its being from them — it existed anterior to and independent of them. Of course, as it did not derive its existence from them, it cannot be dependent upon their continuance for its perpetuity. These appendages are *positive* and not *moral* duties; but the Sabbath itself, whose essential nature lies deeper than adventitious circumstances, and whose origin dates anterior to all such appendages, is a *moral* duty. It is true that, in the absence of external precept, we might not have been able either to discover or comprehend the nature of this duty; but the same may be said of other commandments of the Decalogue. That a duty may be properly embraced under the head of *moral*, in contradistinction from *positive*, precept, it is not necessary that it be actually *discoverable* by human reason; all that is requisite to this is, that, when revealed and explained, we may be able to perceive, in the nature and fitness of things, to some extent, the reasonableness and propriety of the duty in question.

Now, that the observance of the Sabbath is a duty which, when prescribed and understood, commends itself to the understanding of every right-minded person as reasonable and proper, must be admitted. What position can be plainer than this, that a portion of time is necessary to man as a periodical cessation from toil? And is it not equally obvious that this sacred rest-day is necessary to man, as furnishing *one* day for devotional exercises after *six* days of labor? How admirably is this hallowed institution calculated, not only to preserve in the heart of man a grateful remembrance of the wonderful creative acts of God, but also to secure to him the benefits resulting from a periodical consecration of a due proportion of time to devotional exercises!

If it be true then, that, in the very nature and fitness of things, the proportion of one day out of seven is needful for man as a respite from

labor, and also for the performance of that religious service we owe to God, and which is necessary that we may maintain that communion with God so essential to our religious welfare and happiness, then it follows that this institution is grounded on a great moral reason, and consequently is as really a *moral* duty as that enjoined in any one of the Ten Commandments; and, being a moral duty, the perpetuity of its obligation results as a necessary sequence.

2. Again, the *perpetuity* of the Sabbath is clearly inferable from the *history of its origin.* On this subject we read as follows: "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Gen. ii. 2, 3.

The plain, natural construction of the language here employed, implies that the *seventh* day on which God rested was a literal day, such as each of the *six* preceding days had been; and that it was the next day to the *sixth* in immediate succession. And as God *then* rested upon the seventh day, and as the fact of his thus resting is given as a reason why he "blessed and sanctified" that day, the plain inference is, that the consecration of the day commenced simultaneously with the reason upon which it was founded. As it was the first seventh day, coming next after the six days of his creative work, on which he rested, so it was that seventh day which he consecrated, and at *that* time he performed the act of consecration.

The reason given, as well as the plain narrative style in which the facts are recorded, forbid the supposition that the inspired writer only intended to convey the idea that God, some centuries afterward, would set apart some other seventh day in commemoration of the rest which then took place. If the *day* was then spoken of as being "sanctified" by way of *prolepsis*, though not *then* actually set apart, why may we not affirm also that the *prolepsis* applies equally to the fact of God's resting, and conclude that *this* did not really begin till the lapse of centuries, when the day was actually sanctified? There is as much reason to suppose a *prolepsis* in reference to the one as the other. The truth is, there is not the slightest ground for such an hypothesis in either case. We are compelled to view this *proleptical* construction as a groundless, unwarranted, and gratuitous subterfuge, invented to sustain the theory which denies the perpetuity of the Sabbath; but a construction so unnatural and far-fetched can never be rendered plausible, even by the sanction of such authority as that of Dr. Paley. The plain truth is, the *six days* of work connect immediately with the *seventh*

day of rest, and that day of rest connects as closely with its consecration, as such, as the cause with the effect.

If then, as we are bound to conclude, the Sabbath originated at the birth of creation, when as yet none but the then happy pair existed—and if it be farther remembered that, as our Saviour says, "The Sabbath was made for *man*, and not man for the Sabbath"—are we not driven to the conclusion that it is a duty of permanent and universal obligation? It was given to him who was the great federal head and representative of his race. In him were then included his entire progeny. Not a single reason then existed, rendering this institution appropriate and beneficial to him, that does not exist as fully in reference to the entire race, in all ages and in all dispensations. If it be commemorative of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, shown in the works of his hand, in what part, or in what age, of the world can a human being be found not equally bound with Adam to adore and "praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men"? If it be needed as a period of respite from the toils of life, what nation or people, at any period in the world's history, has not needed this day of rest as much as the original dresser of the garden of Eden? If it be considered a day sacred to the performance of religious devotion, is it not alike appropriate to all mankind at all times and places?

Again, if the observance of the Sabbath be not of universal and perpetual obligation, with what propriety could our Saviour have said, "The Sabbath was made for *man*"? He did not say it was made for the patriarch, nor for the Jew, nor for the Greek, but "for MAN"—that is, for the entire race.

3. *Its recognition in the wilderness* furnishes additional evidence of its prior existence and of its perpetuity. The account is thus recorded "And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man; and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that to-day; for to-day is a Sabbath unto the Lord: to-day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the

seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day." Ex. xvi. 22–30.

Some who favor the theory that the observance of the Sabbath is not a duty of universal and perpetual obligation, in order to neutralize the force of the argument against their view of the subject, arising from the fact that the Sabbath originated at the birth of creation, contend that the passage just quoted is a record of the origin of the institution. This is the ground taken by Dr. Paley, and, we believe, by all who view the Sabbath as a local and temporary institution; but we think their theory most obviously untenable.

(1) It is inconsistent with the record of the origin of the Sabbath as detailed in the second chapter of Genesis. This has already been shown; and no *proleptical* construction can relieve the theory of its antagonism to the Mosaic history of creation.

(2) It is irreconcilable with the most natural interpretation of the language just cited, as used by Moses in the wilderness. Observe, Moses does not here speak of the Sabbath as of a new arrangement unheard of till that hour. He does not say, "Behold, I have *now* authority from God to *ordain* and *establish* the Sabbath;" but he refers to it as a matter with which they were familiar. His language is: "This is that which the Lord *hath said*, To-morrow *is* the rest of the holy Sabbath." He does not say, "This accords with what the Lord *now says;*" but his words are, "hath said," as of something *past*, to which he was calling their attention by way of remembrance. He does not say, "To-morrow *shall be* the Sabbath," as if he was issuing a new order; but, "To-morrow *is* the Sabbath," as though speaking of an institution already existing.

Again he repeats, "On the seventh day, which *is* (not *shall be*) the Sabbath." But again, the Lord reproves the people, through Moses, for having *long* neglected to keep his commandments, and gives their neglect of the *Sabbath* as an illustration. How can the supposition, that the law of the Sabbath was then for the first time enjoined, be reconciled with this charge of *long neglect?* The language of God to Moses was: "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath," etc.

The position taken by Dr. Paley and others, that the Sabbath was not instituted at the creation, is not only encumbered by all the difficul-

ties to which we have referred, but it has no solid basis for its support. It is true Dr. Paley asserts that in the passage just quoted from the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, there is no "intimation that the Sabbath, when appointed to be observed, was only the revival of an ancient institution which had been neglected, forgotten, or suspended." In reply to this, we remark, that it is not admitted that the "ancient institution" had been either "forgotten or suspended;" but is it not plain that there is an express charge here preferred against the people, as we have already shown, of *long neglect* of God's commandments respecting the Sabbath? We think the passage in question, notwithstanding the assertion of Dr. Paley, does contain very clear evidence that the transaction in the wilderness referred to, was not the setting up of a *new*, but the recognition of an *old*, institution, which had been partially neglected.

Dr. Paley farther urges his plea against the origin of the Sabbath at the creation, from the fact that there is no express mention of the Sabbath during the patriarchal age. Admit his premises, and his conclusion will not follow. Is it a necessary consequence, that, because the Sabbath was not expressly named during the patriarchal age, therefore it did not exist? Surely not. The Sabbath is not named in the books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the two books of Samuel, or the first book of Kings; yet no one doubts its existence during all the period embraced in these histories. No one doubts that circumcision was regularly practiced by the Jews from Abraham to Christ; and yet there is not an instance of it on record, from their first settlement in Canaan till the days of John the Baptist. Dr. Paley's argument would prove that during this long period that institution was extinct. It proves too much, and therefore nothing at all.

But if there is no express mention of the *Sabbath* during the patriarchal age, we find in that period several allusions to the division of time into *weeks*. Unless this division of days into weeks originated, and was perpetuated, in connection with the Sabbath, how can we account for its origin? The division of time into *days*, *months*, and *years*, finds the analogy upon which it is founded in the phenomena pertaining to the heavenly bodies; but, in all nature, what is there to suggest the idea of dividing days by the number *seven?* The most natural conclusion is, that it originated in the beginning by the appointment of God in connection with the Sabbath; and as the reckoning of time by *weeks* was common during the patriarchal age, we cannot, without adopting an arbitrary mode of construction, suppose that the Sabbath was not also remembered as the *seventh* day of the week.

4. The fact that *the observance of the Sabbath was recorded as one of*

the commandments of the Decalogue, furnishes the most conclusive evi dence of the perpetuity and universality of this obligation.

As the fourth and last commandment on the first of the two tables of stone, we find, written by the finger of God, the following words: "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh-day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it." Ex. xx. 8–11.

The proof of the point in hand, arising from the fact here unfolded, is overwhelmingly conclusive.

(1) The observance of the Sabbath is here plainly shown to be a *moral* duty. If not, why should it thus be embraced as *one* of the *Ten* Commandments, when the other *nine* are all admitted to be *moral* pre cepts of perpetual and universal obligation? Is not the fact that these ten precepts were engraven by "the finger of God" upon "the tables of stone," when no other portion of the Mosaic system was thus recorded, an indication, in that typical dispensation, that they were all to be viewed as of more permanent and universal obligation than the other portions of the Jewish economy? And if so, how can we suppose that *one* of these precepts was only a positive enactment, destined to pass away with the rites and ceremonies of the Levitical economy?

(2) *The terms here used in recording this commandment* show that *it, especially,* was no *new* statute, now for the first time revealed. Moses does not write, "There *shall be* a Sabbath-day," but, "*Remember* the Sabbath-day"—implying that he was reiterating and placing in a new and permanent form, and enforcing, under circumstances of a more awful solemnity, a precept with which that people were already familiar.

If it be said that the allusion to the previous existence of the Sabbath, here implied in the word "remember," was to the transaction in connection with the manna referred to in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, we reply, that any such hypothesis is contradicted by the language of the Decalogue itself. That record connects the Sabbath, not with *the transaction in the wilderness,* but with *the origin of the institution at the creation.* The *reason* here given for the *remembrance* and observance of the Sabbath, is the same given at the creation for its original appointment—"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and *rested the seventh day;* wherefore the

Lord *blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.*" Observe, it is not here said, "The Lord *now* blesseth, or, in the wilderness, blessed the Sabbath-day;" but, "The Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it"—that is, in connection with his resting, and for that reason he "blessed," *sanctified, hallowed,* or *set apart,* the Sabbath or seventh day to a sacred use. And as the *consecration* of the day, both in the second chapter of Genesis and the twentieth chapter of Exodus, is immediately connected with *God's resting,* as though *simultaneous,* for us, without authority, to tear them asunder, by interposing between them some thousands of years, is not to *expound,* but to *pervert* the Scriptures.

(3) We think *our Saviour's comment on the Decalogue,* with all who are disposed to submit to the decision of the great Teacher, must set this question at rest.

The question was asked our Saviour, with evident reference to the Decalogue, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus replied: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment"—that is, this comprehends the first table, and, of course, the Sabbath. Then, after having comprised the second table in the words, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," he adds: "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. xxii. 36–40.

Now let it be admitted, which, we think, none will dispute—1. That the Ten Commandments are the law here referred to; 2. That our Saviour here intended to give an epitome of the Decalogue—admit these two positions, then the argument here furnished for the perpetuity and universality of the obligations of the Sabbath is plain and short It runs thus: The obligation to "love God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind," is *perpetual and universal;* but this includes *the observance of the Sabbath*—therefore the obligation *to observe the Sabbath* is *perpetual and universal.* To the same effect we may reason from our premises, thus: To "love God with all the heart," etc., is a *moral,* and not a *positive,* duty; but *the observance of the Sabbath* is included in "loving God with all the heart," etc.—therefore *the observance of the Sabbath* is a *moral,* and not a *positive,* duty. Again, the obligation of all *moral* duty is *perpetual and universal;* but *the observance of the Sabbath* is a *moral* duty—therefore *the obligation to observe the Sabbath is perpetual and universal.*

(4) Our Saviour and his apostles have given testimony in favor of the perpetuity and universality of the obligation of the Sabbath, by teaching *the perpetuity of the moral law.*

In his Sermon on the Mount, Christ says: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matt. v. 17, 18. Now, to suppose that any portion of the moral law, as given by Moses, is abrogated by the gospel, is not only to assume a position gratuitously without a syllable of authority, but in direct opposition to these words of the Saviour. Let the law here be taken in its widest sense, embracing both the ceremonial and moral departments, which is unquestionably the true interpretation, and how can the abrogation of the Sabbath be consistent with our Saviour's declaration? Types, shadows, and ceremonies, may pass away—yea, they did pass away—by receiving their fulfillment in Christ; but how could the Sabbath thus pass away? If we say that any one of the Ten Commandments passed away by being fulfilled in Christ, why not another? Why not the whole Decalogue? If Christ has wholly fulfilled the fourth commandment, why not all the rest? Did he not fulfill the whole moral law as really and fully as he did any portion of it? A type may be completely fulfilled by the coming of the antitype—a shadow by the revealment of the substance, a ceremony by the manifestation of "some better thing"—but a *moral* law can only be completely fulfilled by its perpetual and universal observance. Hence, as the moral law, of which the Sabbath has been shown to be a part, can never receive its complete fulfillment while a human being is left upon earth to observe it, so the obligation of the Sabbath, according to Christ's declaration, can never be annulled.

Equally explicit is the testimony of St. Paul upon this subject. He asks: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid. Yea, we establish the law." That the apostle here spoke of the Decalogue, or moral law, there can be no question. In continuation of his argument, he says: "I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." (See Rom. iii. 31; vii. 7.) Here the apostle, by directly quoting one of the Ten Commandments, shows conclusively that he referred to the *moral*, and not the *ceremonial*, law. Hence, as he does not "make void," but *establishes this* law, and as the Sabbath is one portion of it, it necessarily follows that the obligation to observe this precept exists under the gospel, and, if so, this obligation must be perpetual and universal.

Thus we conclude that, as the Sabbath is a *moral* duty, as it originated at the birth of creation, as it was made for *man* in general, as it was recognized in the wilderness as a previously known institution, as it

is embraced as a part of the Decalogue, or moral law, and as this moral law is recognized by Christ and his apostles as authoritative under the gospel, therefore this institution is of perpetual and universal obligation.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VII.

QUESTION 1. How have theologians differed in their views concerning the Sabbath?

2. What is the distinction between a *moral* and a *positive* duty?

3. What is the first argument presented in favor of the *perpetuity* of the Sabbath?

4. Is the Sabbath a *positive* or a *moral* duty?

5. What serious objection is offered to Paley's "Moral and Political Philosophy"?

6. What appendages to the Jewish Sabbath come under the head of *positive* duties?

7. That a duty may be *moral* and not *positive*, must it necessarily be *discoverable* by reason?

8 What is the second argument offered in favor of the perpetuity of the Sabbath?

9. Where is the *origin* of the Sabbath recorded?

10. What saying of Christ proves the perpetuity of the Sabbath?

11. What is the third proof given of the perpetuity of the Sabbath?

12. How is the untenableness of Dr. Paley's view of the subject shown?

13. How is his plea, that the Sabbath is not mentioned during the patriarchal age, met?

14. What is the fourth proof of the perpetuity of the Sabbath?

15. How does Christ's comment on the Decalogue prove the perpetuity of the Sabbath?

16. What farther proof on this subject is given by Christ and his apostles?

17. How is the proof summed up?

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CHAPTER VIII.

THE SABBATH—ITS CHANGE FROM THE SEVENTH TO THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

I. It may easily be shown that this change is reconcilable with *the law of the Sabbath.* Admitting that the institution is of perpetual and universal obligation, it necessarily follows that it cannot be changed in what is essential to its nature, except by the same divine authority by which it was originally constituted. Mere adventitious appendages or circumstances, not divinely prescribed or pertaining to the essence of the institution, may be modified or altered as experience may dictate, but all that is essential to its character must be preserved intact, or the institution is perverted. The Sabbath in its real essence, as we have already shown, is a *moral* as contradistinguished from a *positive* institute. But the question to be settled is this: What elements are comprised as essential to the Sabbath? This can only be determined by appealing to the great moral code, as formally enacted and inscribed on the tables of stone.

We cannot be made to believe, even by the revered authority of Richard Watson, that the Sabbath is founded upon a law "partly *moral* and partly *positive;*" nor can we perceive the import of the language used in the presentation of that theory, that "the institution consists of two parts—the *Sabbath,* or holy rest, and the *day* on which it is observed." The *Sabbath* is the institution in question. Then to say that the Sabbath is only *a part* of the institution, is to say that it is only *a part of itself,* which is absurd. Again, to say that a *holy rest* is one part of the institution, and *a day* or time on which it is observed is another part, is to speak unintelligibly; for how can we conceive of a *holy rest,* or *Sabbath,* without *a day* or *time* on which it took place? But if the meaning be that *a Sabbath,* or *a holy day* of rest, is *one thing,* and *the particular day* on which the rest takes place is *another thing*—if *this* be the meaning, why not so express it? If we admit the theory, that *the particular day* on which the Sabbath is observed is an essential part of the institution, then we must abandon the idea that the institu-

tion is embraced in the moral law; for *the specific day* to be observed is not there prescribed—all that is expressed is, that after *six* days' labor, the next day, which, according to that mode of reckoning, will be the *seventh*, is to be observed as the Sabbath. It is there said that "the Lord blessed (not a particular seventh day, but) the *Sabbath-day*, and hallowed it;" hence it is clear that *the particular seventh day* is not essential to the institution of the Sabbath. It is not prescribed in the statute engraven upon stone by which this duty is enjoined; therefore, to say that the Sabbath is an institution partly *positive* and partly *moral*, not only involves us in absurdity, as shown above, but excludes it from being embraced in the Decalogue, and paves the way for its abrogation.

The *particular seventh day* in question is a mere adventitious appendage, not constituting an essential element of the Sabbatic institution. This appendage is no *constituent* part of the Sabbath, but only a *positive* enactment, which may or may not have a temporary and local existence, and may or may not pass away without affecting the perpetuity or the universality of the institution as such.

Thus we see how it was that all the merely Jewish ordinances and enactments concerning their sabbaths, embracing much *minutia* and some burdensome and rigorous requirements, could pass away with the rest of their typical and ceremonial system, leaving the *Sabbath itself*, with every element essential to its nature, as embodied in the moral law, permanent and undisturbed. Thus we arrive at the conclusion, that *the particular seventh day* to be observed, not being an essential element of the institution, may be changed without affecting the integrity of the Sabbath, and in perfect conformity to the position that it is grounded not on *positive*, but *moral* law.

Again, to say that *the particular seventh day* in question is an essential element of the Sabbath, embodied in the moral law upon which it is founded, and consequently not properly susceptible of change without formal, divine precept to that effect, *is unreasonable in view of the nature of the subject.*

Some nations and communities commence their computation of days at *one hour*, and some at another; some begin at six in the evening, some at midnight. Now, if the *precise day* were essential, so would be the *precise hour* at which to begin the reckoning; otherwise, the Sabbath of one people would be half over before that of another people would commence.

Again, suppose the precise seventh day and the exact hour had both been prescribed in the moral law, even then confusion and inconsist-

ency would have been the inevitable result. All nations do not dwell in the same latitude and longitude; and from this fact alone, it would necessarily follow that different nations, according as their latitude and longitude varied, would commence their Sabbath at different times; and the entire day, held sacred by some, would be desecrated by others Thus, according to this view, the only way to prevent the Sabbath from being profaned would have been for each nation to be furnished with a separate and distinct revelation on the law of the Sabbath, arranged, like an almanac, according to the diversity of localities. Such a one the Jews had, but it was connected not with the *moral*, but the *ceremonial* law, which, being intended for them alone, passed away with their "law of commandments contained in ordinances." But the Sabbath, as embraced in the moral law, being intended for *man*—for all men, in all ages and in all latitudes and longitudes—is encumbered and fettered by no such localizing elements. Neither the specific seventh day nor the precise hour is prescribed, because neither the one nor the other was essential; hence, agreeably to both Scripture and reason, the Sabbath may be changed from the *seventh* to the *first* day of the week in perfect consistency with the great moral law on which it is founded.

II. THIS CHANGE WAS MADE BY APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY, DIVINELY CONFERRED.

1. To establish this position, we observe, first, that *the apostles were divinely commissioned by our Lord to organize and regulate the Christian Church.* This appears from the terms of their grand commission. "Go ye therefore," said Jesus, "and teach all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Here the apostles are sent forth with a divine commission to teach the nations "all things whatsoever the Saviour had commanded them." This certainly embraced every thing necessary to the organization and regulation of the Church, and consequently included the institution of the Sabbath. But as a guarantee that they would be divinely guided and assisted in this work, our Lord promises his accompanying presence "alway, even unto the end of the world."

But to show their plenary authority yet more fully, Christ says to his apostles: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." John xx. 21. Now as the Father had sent the Son, endued with "all power in heaven and in earth," even so does the Son send forth his apostles in the discharge of their apostolic functions, clothed with all the authority he had received from the Father—that is, the apostles, in the discharge of their high office, as Christ's inspired agents, expounded the doc-

trines of salvation, and "set in order" the affairs of the Church with the same divine authority as though Christ had performed this work in person.

2. The divine authority of the apostles appears from *the promises given them by the Saviour.*

Christ said to his apostles: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John xiv. 26. Again, Jesus says to his apostles: "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." John xvi. 13.

More Scripture proof to the same effect might be presented, but the passages quoted amply show that the doings and teachings of the inspired apostles in executing their mission, as the "master-builders" in the erection and organization of the Christian Church, ought to be viewed as divinely authoritative. It only remains, therefore, to examine the evidence establishing the *fact* that

III. THE SABBATH WAS CHANGED UNDER THE APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATION FROM THE SEVENTH TO THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

1. This appears, first, from *the testimony of the New Testament.*

If the fact can be made manifest that from the time of the resurrection of Christ the apostles and the Christian Churches generally celebrated religious service regularly, not on the *Jewish Sabbath,* according to the long-established and universal custom of the Jews, but on the *first* day of the week, it will appear, beyond a reasonable doubt, that by apostolic example and direction *that day,* instead of the *seventh,* was set apart as the Christian Sabbath.

On this subject, we thus read: "Upon the *first* day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow." Acts xx. 7. In 1 Cor. xvi. 2, we read: "Upon the *first* day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The apostle had just said that he had "given order to the Churches in Galatia" similar to the instructions here furnished the Corinthians. Now, we ask, is it not a rational inference, from these scriptures, that it was the regular custom of these Churches, while under the eye and direct supervision of the inspired apostles, to assemble *on the first day of the week* for religious worship?

In reference to the disciples at Troas, referred to in the passage quoted from The Acts, it is not said, that "the disciples came together

on the first day of the week" (as though it had incidentally occurred); but the language is, "Upon the first day of the week, *when* the disciples came together to break bread." The form of the language obviously indicates that this assembling of the disciples on "the first day of the week to break bread" was an established custom in the Church; and it seems also to have been the custom of the Churches in Galatia and Corinth, for why should the apostle have specified that their collections for the poor should all be made on *the first day of the week*, unless as matter of convenience, *that* being the day of their regularly assembling for divine service? And if that was the day on which all these Churches met for weekly worship, especially for the "breaking of bread," or the Supper of the Lord, is it not evident that they observed the *first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath?*

St. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians (Gal. iv. 10), says: "Ye observe *days*, and months, and times, and years." Macknight but expresses the opinion of commentators generally, when he says: "By 'days,' the apostle means the Jewish weekly Sabbaths." Of course he here reproves the Galatians for their superstitious adherence to these days, according to Jewish custom.

Again, the same apostle says: "Let no one judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a festival, or of a new moon, or of *sabbaths*." Col. ii. 16. Here the apostle refers also to the Jewish "commandments contained in ordinances" which Christ had taken "out of the way, and nailed to his cross." The testimony of the apostle must be understood in these passages as being pointed against the sabbaths of the Jews, so far as they were connected with the *ceremonial* and *ritual* precepts of the law; but, unless he intended to contradict himself, which is inadmissible, he had no reference to the Sabbath as set forth in the moral law, for we have already shown that he taught the perpetuity of that law; hence, according to St. Paul, while the Jewish Sabbath, so far as relates to circumstances outside of the Decalogue, is superseded under the gospel, yet that institution, as embodied in the Decalogue, is not abrogated, but *established*.

And as the Jewish restriction of the Sabbath to the *seventh* day of the week is not derived from the moral law, which is permanent and unalterable—but from outside, positive enactment, which is liable to change—it necessarily follows that, under the gospel, while the institution of the Sabbath cannot be annulled, yet it may be changed from the *seventh* to the *first* day of the week. And since St. Paul teaches that the Jewish sabbaths *are not*, while the moral law *is*, obligatory on Christians, it is clear that the Christian Church is under no obligation

to observe the *seventh day of the week* as a sabbath; but as the *first day of the week* was observed as the Christian Sabbath by the apostles and the first Christians under their sanction, it necessarily follows that, from the establishment of Christianity, the *first* and not the *seventh* day of the week has been the divinely authorized Sabbath.

St. John (Rev. i. 10) says: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's-day," etc. All commentators agree that the reference here is to the *first* day of the week, which was termed "the Lord's-day" in honor of our Lord's resurrection, which took place on that day; hence, from that period and ever afterward, beginning with the inspired apostles themselves, the *first* day of the week has been termed "the Lord's-day" by the Christian Church, and observed, instead of the seventh, as the Christian Sabbath.

2. That the apostles and first Christians observed the *first* day of the week as a Sabbath, assembling regularly on that day for the public worship of God and for the sacrament of the Lord's-supper, is not only evident from the New Testament, but *this fact is confirmed by an uninterrupted stream of Church-history, beginning in the apostolic age and extending to the present period.*

Upon this question, a few of the many available testimonies will be sufficient.

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, A.D. 101, says: "Let every one that loves Christ keep holy the *Lord's-day*—the queen of days, the resurrection-day, the highest of all days."

Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, who wrote in the second century, says: "Both custom and reason challenge from us that we should honor *the Lord's-day*, seeing on that day it was that our Lord Jesus completed his resurrection from the dead."

Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, who also lived in the second century, and who was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a companion of St. John, speaks of *the Lord's-day* as the *Christian Sabbath.* "On the Lord's-day," said he, "every one of us Christians keep the Sabbath."

Clement of Alexandria, of the same century, testifies: "A Christian, according to the command of the gospel, observes the *Lord's-day*, thereby glorifying the resurrection of the Lord."

Tertullian, of the same period, says: "The *Lord's-day* is the holy day of the Christian Church."

These testimonies abundantly establish the fact, not only that the *first day of the week* was styled "the Lord's-day," in honor of our Saviour's resurrection, but that the Christian Church, even in the apostolic age, observed it as *the Christian Sabbath.*

IV. In the next place, we observe that this change of the Sabbath from the *seventh* to the *first* day of the week under the gospel economy *is founded upon adequate reasons.*

1. It is admitted that the *seventh* was a day appropriate for the Jewish Sabbath, because it celebrated and kept up in lively remembrance the great work of creation. The poet has said:

> "'T was great to speak the world from nought,
> 'T was greater to redeem."

How appropriate is it, then, that the resurrection of Christ, the crowning evidence of his Messiahship, and the concluding scene in the great drama of the work of redemption for which he was manifested in the flesh, should be celebrated as the Christian Sabbath! Hence, from the morning on which he arose, as a memorial of that glorious event, the first day of the week has ever been hallowed by the Christian Church as "the Lord's-day," or the Sabbath. And thus, while the Christian Sabbath still commemorates the great work of creation according to the original appointment, by the change from the *seventh* to the *first* day of the week, it also commemorates the resurrection of our Lord.

2. But this day is not only memorable as the day of Christ's resurrection, but for several of his remarkable appearances afterward; for on the same day on which he arose he appeared twice unto his disciples. On the next Lord's-day, when they were all assembled, as though for religious worship, he again appeard in their midst. It was also on the Lord's-day that the miraculous Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place; and through the successive ages of the Church God has manifestly sanctioned the public celebration of his worship on the Lord's-day by innumerable outpourings of his gracious Spirit, in the conversion of millions of souls in the congregations of his saints. Thus, from all the considerations we have presented, we are warranted in the conclusion that the Christian Church is divinely authorized and required to observe not the *seventh*, but the *first*, day of the week, or "the Lord's-day," as the Sabbath.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VIII.

QUESTION 1. How can it be shown that this change of the *day* of the Sabbath is reconcilable with the Sabbatic law?

2. Is the *specific day* a part of the essence of the Sabbath?

3. How is this position proved?

4. What relation has the *specific seventh day* to the institution itself?

5 What is the first position taken in reference to the apostles' authority?

6. What scriptures show their authority?

7. By what promises is the divine guidance pledged?

8. What proof of the change of the day does the New Testament furnish?

9. What proof may be derived from Church-history?

10. Upon what adequate reasons is the change founded?

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH—ITS OBSERVANCE.

THIS may be learned, partly from the Decalogue itself, and partly from allusions to the subject in other parts of Scripture. The duty of keeping the Sabbath may be comprised in two parts—first, what we are to refrain from doing; secondly, what we are required to do.

I. We consider what we should REFRAIN FROM DOING on the Sabbath.

On this day we should refrain from all ordinary labor and worldly business. The law reads: "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates."

From this we learn, *first*, that the obligation of observing the Sabbath, with those who are householders or heads of families, extends to all under their control—to *children*, to *strangers*, or guests sojourning with them, and to domestic animals employed for purposes of labor. The law of the Sabbath forbids all ordinary work on the Lord's-day, holding the head of the house responsible for all under his control. The spirit of the law will not, however, forbid such acts of labor as may be necessarily connected with the duty of attendance upon the services of religion. Traveling to and from church, and the employment of animals for that purpose, are not here forbidden; but all such employments merely for business or visits of pleasure are plain violations of the Sabbatic institution.

The comment of our Saviour, however, while it sanctions the due observance of the Sabbath, according to the true spirit and design of the institution, condemns the extreme rigor with which the hypocritical Pharisees pretended to adhere to the letter of the Jewish law on the subject, while in reality they cared not for its spirit. He teaches clearly that works of *necessity* or *mercy* may properly be done on the Sabbath. Thus, the *necessary* preparation of food, both for man and beast, may lawfully be made on the Sabbath-day; but even this preparation, so far as it may conveniently be made on the day before, cannot be then

neglected and attended to on the Sabbath without a violation of the law. The visitation of the sick, or of the poor and needy, in order to do good to their souls or bodies, is a work appropriate for the Sabbath, and beautifully harmonizes with our Saviour's teaching, when he demands: "Is it lawful on the Sabbath-days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?" Luke vi. 9.

II. But we inquire, What are the POSITIVE DUTIES which the law of this institution requires us to perform on the Sabbath-day?

"Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy," is the divine injunction; but what is implied in *keeping it holy?*

1. It cannot be *kept holy,* when spent in idleness. Man was made for activity and usefulness. An idle drone can neither be happy himself nor useful to others. Although the Sabbath is a day of rest, in a certain sense—that is, of cessation from worldly pursuits—yet it is by no means a day of *inaction,* or *idleness.* This day can only be properly "hallowed" by being devoted strictly and fully to the worship of God and attendance upon religious duties. He who spends the Sabbath in idleness at home, or in reading or social conversation, when he has it in his power to attend upon the public worship of God, as *really* violates the Sabbath as the man who trades in his store or works in his shop or field.

One design of the Sabbath is, to furnish for both man and beast a needed repose from bodily toil; another design is, to set apart one day of seven for special devotion to public worship and other religious duties. Now it is just as essential to the proper observance of the Sabbath to attend to one division of these duties as the other; hence we are no more at liberty to neglect public worship, and pretend that we are keeping holy the Sabbath, because we merely abstain from "doing ordinary work therein," and from "buying or selling," than we are to pursue our ordinary worldly business on that day, and suppose that, because we spend a portion of it in attendance upon public worship, we are properly keeping the Sabbath. When prevented from attending public worship by affliction, or other providential causes, the Sabbath may be properly observed by "searching the Scriptures," reading good books, or performing other works of piety; but when not thus prevented, we cannot neglect the public services of the sanctuary without violating the spirit of the Sabbatic law.

2. The practice of thus hallowing the Sabbath, by devoting a portion of it to the public service of God, not only grows out of the *design* of the institution itself, but is sanctioned by the example of our Saviour, who regularly attended the services of the temple or the synagogue

on the Sabbath-day. It is also in accordance with the example of the apostles and first Christians, who statedly met for public worship on "the Lord's-day;" nor can it be neglected without violating the apostolic injunction: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together."

The attendance upon *family* and *private devotion* not being peculiarly duties of the Sabbath, but alike obligatory upon all days, will not be particularly considered here, but we will conclude this chapter by some general reflections on the beneficial tendency of the institution.

III. *The* BENEFITS *derived from the Sabbath.*

1. The proper observance of the Sabbath is a great blessing, even *in a temporal point of view.* Here we realize the truth of our Saviour's words: "The Sabbath was made for man." He who created man knew his nature, and gave him this institution to meet one of his constitutional necessities. Such is the nature of both our mental and bodily powers, that they cannot, without injury, be overtaxed with labor; and such is the natural cupidity, avarice, and ambition of fallen humanity, that most persons, but for the restrictions of the Sabbath, would devote themselves so incessantly to mental or bodily toil as greatly to enervate and impair their powers, if not entirely to destroy them, and bring on premature superannuation or untimely death. And if men would thus be led to overtax their own powers, how much more certainly would they overwork their servants and their animals! Hence, if there were no command making the observance of the Sabbath a duty, such an institution would be a wise and judicious arrangement, merely as a measure of State policy or worldly prudence.

2. But the *benefits* of this institution, *in a social, moral, and religious point of view, are incalculably great.*

The Sabbath, with its religious services, by bringing the people of any community together at regular and frequent intervals, naturally tends to cultivate among them a better acquaintance with each other, and thus to create a mutual sympathy and community of interest; while, at the same time, that spirit of selfishness so naturally resulting from an isolated state would be counteracted, and a feeling of unity and brotherhood, of friendly assimilation and social attachment, would necessarily ensue.

Again, when we reflect on the pure and sublime themes so constantly kept before the religious assemblies on the Lord's-day, and the ruinous tendency of those habits of idleness and dissipation which would naturally result from the neglect of this institution, how numerous and great must those benefits appear which, even in a social and moral view of

the subject, flow from the Sabbatic institution—with its oft-recurring solemn and orderly assemblies, its songs and its prayers, its lectures and its sermons!

But look especially at the directly religious tendency of the Sabbath. Since men are so prone to forget God and neglect religion, under circumstances the most favorable, how greatly would this irreligious proclivity be enhanced by a withdrawal of the influences of the Sabbath! There is a sacred stillness which marks this consecrated day—a solemnity connected with the "sound of the church-going bell" and its peacefully-assembling multitudes — that all must feel and acknowledge. Under these influences thousands of the thoughtless and the gay are led to the house of God, and thus brought within reach of the blessed word; and in this way each returning Sabbath numbers its multitudes reclaimed from vice, and washed and sanctified by redeeming grace, to swell the numbers of the saints on earth, and prepare them for the mansions on high. Blot from existence the holy Sabbath, with all its sacred associations and influences, and how appalling the consequences that would ensue!

Finally, the Sabbath is *beneficial as a type of the heavenly rest.* Such it was, doubtless, in its original appointment, such it was to the saints in ancient times, such it has ever been to the Christian Church, and such it will continue to be while time endures. How strengthening to the faith, and how encouraging to the hope, of the believer must be this oft-recurring rest! Buffeted by adverse winds and waves, faint-hearted and cast down, persecuted and afflicted, with what joy must the weary pilgrim hail this day of sacred rest and worship, which so forcibly reminds him of that "rest that remaineth to the people of God"!

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IX.

QUESTION 1. From what parts of Scripture may this duty be learned?
2 What should we refrain from doing on the Sabbath?
3 What is a peculiar duty of householders?
4. What does the Saviour condemn in reference to the Jewish method of observing the Sabbath?
5. What is the first thing named as implied in keeping the Sabbath?
6. Does this duty imply attendance upon divine worship?
7. By whose example is this duty sanctioned?
8. What temporal blessings result from the observance of the Sabbath?
9. What are the social blessings connected with this institution?
10. What benefits of a moral and religious character result from it?
11. What are its typical uses?

PART III.—THE MORALS OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK III.—OUR DUTY TO OUR NEIGHBOR.

CHAPTER X.

OUR DUTY TO OUR NEIGHBOR—ITS GENERAL PRINCIPLES CONSIDERED

AGREEABLY to our Lord's comment on the moral law, our duty to God, which we have already considered, was embraced in the *first* of the two tables of stone, and our duty to our neighbor in the *second.* The former is all fulfilled in *loving God supremely;* the latter in *loving our neighbor as ourselves.*

To the latter branch of this duty, or to the second table of the Decalogue, we now call attention. In our Saviour's epitomized presentation of the moral law, the six commandments of the second table are all comprised in this sentence, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;" and also in our Saviour's golden rule (Matt. vii. 12).

St. Paul comments on the moral law in perfect accordance with our Saviour's teachings. He says: "He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. xiii. 8–10.

Thus it appears that all moral obligation—our duty to God, ourselves, and others—is comprised in one word—LOVE. Here is the grand center and source whence all duty is derived—love to God and love to man. How sublimely simple and comprehensive is this comment of Christ; and how beautiful the illustration of St. Paul! In considering

this moral code, so far as it relates to *our love to our neighbor*, two things are to be noticed—

I. The general principles embraced.

II. Their application to special cases and conditions.

In this chapter we will consider *the general principles embraced.*

These are all comprised in the six commandments of the second table; and no more simple and correct method of analyzing and illustrating the subject can be adopted than to consider each of these commandments separately.

I. The *fifth* commandment—the *first* in the second table—reads thus: "Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Ex. xx. 12.

Although this commandment only specifies the duty of children to parents, yet, according to its scope and bearing, it should be understood as covering the whole ground, not only of the obligation of children to parents, and of parents to children, but of inferiors to superiors, and of superiors to inferiors. As the general duty here enjoined will be particularly considered under our next general division, to avoid repetition, we omit its discussion here.

II. The sixth commandment is, "Thou shalt not kill."

1. This commandment *forbids* the taking of life—either our own, or that of our fellow-creatures—except in case of *public justice* by process of law, necessary *self-defense*, or *justifiable war* lawfully waged.

In reference to the first exception here specified, there can be little controversy. All will admit that, for a capital offense, the law of the land may rightfully take the life of the criminal. This is only carrying out the ancient precept delivered to Noah and his family: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Gen. ix. 6.

It must also be understood that *treason*, because it is of the essence of murder, and necessarily leads to its commission, is here constructively embraced as a crime included with murder, and may rightfully be involved in the same penalty of forfeiture of life.

But as to crimes and misdemeanors of less magnitude, and for the perpetration of which there is no warrant in the word of God for inflicting the penalty of death, should any State attach such penalty, and the officers of the law carry out the sentence and execution accordingly, the State itself then becomes the violator of the sixth commandment, by taking the life of man without authority from God who gave it.

In a case of this kind, the State itself is the offender in the sight of Heaven, and, as may be apprehended, will, sooner or later, be visited with judicial punishment. There can be no question that it is the

duty of all civil officers, whether judicial or executive, while holding office under government, to carry out the constitution and laws of that government faithfully, according to their official oath; and, so long as they are not convinced of any discrepancy between the civil and the divine law, they are blameless in so doing. But should they be required, as civil officers, to sanction or perform what they are convinced is contrary to the law of God, then they can no longer act as officers of the law without being identified with the State as *particeps criminis*. Their only proper remedy then is, "for conscience' sake," to resign.

2. That *self-defense*, when our own lives are attacked or in imminent danger, is a duty, there can be no question. The law of nature dictates it. Nor is it inconsistent with the duty of "loving our neighbor as ourselves." Yet even the plea of self-defense cannot justify us in taking the life of another person unless that self-defense be strictly necessary, and not brought about by our own willful act. If we have voluntarily brought the difficulty or danger upon ourselves, or if we can see a way of escape from it by any other means, we cannot, without guilt, save ourselves by destroying others.

3. It is generally conceded that the taking of life in *war* is not murder. St. Paul says: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God" Rom. xiii. 1, 2.

Human governments, then, are the ordinance of God—not, however in such sense that God sanctions all their principles or measures. They are frequently cruel, unjust, and vicious. As such, God may tolerate, but he cannot sanction or approve them. Yet that human governments should exist, notwithstanding their imperfections, is according to the divine will, and that, as a general rule, they should be treated with respect and submission, is also a maxim of revelation; but as, in the nature of things, human governments in the present state of the world cannot be maintained without war, it necessarily follows that war is sometimes justifiable; and if so, then the taking of life in war, according to the rules of honorable warfare, is not a violation of this commandment.

But if the war, though justifiable in itself, be conducted on principles of cruelty, and human life be wantonly and uselessly destroyed, contrary to the rules of honorable warfare, so far as this is the case, the taking of life in war is as really murder as in any other instance.

Again, if the war itself be unjustifiable — if it be commenced and carried on through wicked motives, merely through worldly pride and

ambition—through the lust of power or gain, or to gratify a spirit of revenge—in all such cases, the war, from beginning to end, is but a wholesale murder—it is a plain violation of the precept, "Thou shalt not kill."

In an unjustifiable war, the nation bringing it on is guilty of a national offense against God and man, for which, as a nation, they will be likely to be visited with condign punishment. The individuals composing the nation waging such a war, so far as they may voluntarily engage in it, with a proper understanding of its character, are personal violators of the sixth commandment, and are really guilty of murder; but so far as their participation is not *voluntary*, but unavoidable, they are individually innocent or excusable.

4 Once more: This command, "Thou shalt not kill," also expressly prohibits—

Dueling.—There is no mode of reasoning by which this sin can be made to appear in any better light than that of *willful murder.* It sets aside, on the ground of mere custom, fashion, pride, or prejudice, the express statute of Heaven. It treats with contempt the "image of God"—in which man was created. It combines, in a single act, both suicide and the murder of our fellow-being.

Dueling may properly be classed with the barbarisms of the dark ages. The law of *honor,* falsely so called, from which it claims its sanction, has nothing in reason or revelation to sustain it. It is alike repugnant to the teachings of both—it can have no tendency to decide the matter of quarrel between the combatants. Nor can it be a test of true bravery; for he who has the firmness and heroism to decline a contest in the face of the scoff and ridicule of the ungodly multitude, rather than do a wrong act, gives evidence of more real courage than he could give by hazarding his life and that of his antagonist in a duel.

If a man falls in a duel, he has murdered himself without law or reason, but in opposition to the dictates of both; and, in many cases, rashly and sinfully abandoned his post of responsibility as the guardian, protector, and support, of a helpless family. If he kills his antagonist, he has murdered his fellow-man, and perhaps thus thrown *his* helpless widow and orphans adrift upon the world in a state of dependence and want. If neither falls, both are guilty, in intent, of both suicide and murder, in the common sense of the term. And in either case, and whatever may be the issue, the duelist has planted in his conscience a thorn that will pierce his soul with anguish while life endures, if not forever and ever. And for what good end are all these evils evoked?

Who is benefited? What law of God or of reason has been honored? It is but a sacrifice of the dearest interests of humanity upon the altar of folly and madness.

5. *Suicide.*—Some of the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers at times expressed very correct notions in reference to this crime. Plato says: "We men are all by the appointment of God in a certain prison, or custody, which we ought not to break out of, or run away." Cicero says: "God, the supreme governor of all things, forbids us to depart hence without his order. All pious men ought to have patience to continue in the body as long as God shall please who sent us hither; and not force themselves out of the world before he calls for them, lest they be found deserters of the station appointed them by God." But Cicero, in another place, appears as the apologist of this crime, and Seneca was also its advocate; while Demosthenes, Cato, Brutus, and Cassius, all encouraged it by their example. Hence it is manifest that the Bible alone can establish us firmly on the right foundation in reference to this question.

That the divine law, as exhibited in the sixth commandment, clearly prohibits suicide, may be seen both from the letter and spirit of that precept, "Thou shalt not kill." Surely, to take my own life is as literal a transgression of this law as to take the life of my neighbor! Our Saviour's version of the law, "Thou shalt do *no* murder," is still more emphatic in the prohibition of suicide and every conceivable species of murder.

The fact that the Mosaic law specifies no penalty against the crime of suicide, is no proof that *it* was not included with every other species of murder. This crime, from its very nature, places him who commits it at once beyond the reach of all human law. Of course, to annex a penalty, under such circumstances, would involve an absurdity—an utter impossibility. He who takes his own life, can only be punished for that offense by Him who is the author of life, and to whom all are accountable for this guilt.

The precept of our Saviour, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor *as thyself*," plainly prohibits suicide. If, as all admit, this language forbids the taking of the life of *our neighbor, because* we would thereby exhibit less love to our neighbor than we have for ourselves, it is necessarily implied that self-murder is forbidden, *because*, by performing this act, we would show less love to *ourselves* than we are required to exercise toward *our neighbor*. Hence, as the precept implies a similarity or correspondence between our love for *ourselves* and our *neighbor*, if it forbids the taking of the life of our neighbor, it must also prohibit suicide.

Again as the taking of human life, as a penalty annexed to crime, can only be justified on the principle of necessity, in view of maintaining just government over mankind in a state of political association, it follows—as self-murder cannot be placed on the ground of a similar necessity, in view of the maintenance of society, and personal security and happiness therein—that therefore it can only be contemplated as a crime, alike repugnant to the letter and spirit of both natural and divine law, though in its nature not susceptible of punishment by human penalty.

Again, the reason assigned in Scripture rendering the crime of taking human life so heinous and offensive, applies as forcibly to suicide as to any other description of murder—"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man." Now, is it not clear that, as the turpitude of the crime of "shedding man's blood" results from the fact that he was "made in the image of God," and as this applies alike to every individual of the race—from these reasons is it not clear that suicide is as emphatically condemned as the "shedding of man's blood" under any circumstances whatever?

6. According to the admitted maxim, that "the greater comprehends the less," the command, "Thou shalt not kill," not only prohibits *murder*, but all *offenses of less magnitude* whose natural tendency leads to the perpetration of murder.

Under this head may be embraced—*sinful anger, hatred or malice, revenge, strife, excess*—in relation to food, drink, or labor—*unnecessary exposure of our own life or that of others*, and the *neglect of the necessary means of preserving life*, under any circumstances.

(1) *Sinful Anger.*—As the indulgence in *this* often results in murder, it is forbidden by this commandment. Although it cannot be supposed that the pure and holy nature of God is susceptible of anger, as a perturbing or agitating passion, in the sense in which this emotion often exists in man, yet, as in his nature he is immovably opposed to sin, this fixed opposition—this holy disapprobation and hatred of sin, and determination to punish the sinner—are expressed in Scripture by the term "anger;" hence we read, "God is *angry* with the wicked every day." From this fact we may rationally infer that *anger* is not, under all circumstances, sinful; but that, in the sense in which it is commonly indulged, it is sinful, and in direct antagonism to the great law of love in which the essence of Christianity is embraced, is clearly set forth in the Bible. St. Paul says: "Let all bitterness, and *wrath*, and *anger*, and clamor, be put away from you, with all *malice*." Eph. iv. 31. In the same apostle's enumeration of "the works of the flesh," he embraces

not only "murders," but also *strife, variance, hatred,* and *wrath.* And St. John testifies: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." 1 John iii. 15. Anger, if permitted to carry us beyond a calm and holy indignation against sin, or if allowed a permanent lodgment in the heart, becomes sinful and pernicious, destroying the peace of him who indulges in it, and divesting him of that amiability of temper and behavior which is essential to the Christian character.

(2) *Revenge* is also interdicted by this law. St. Paul says: "Recompense to no man evil for evil. . . . Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not evercome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans xii. 17, 19–21. How attractive, how sublime, are the mild precepts of the gospel, when contrasted with the selfishness and cruelty of human philosophy! Lord, endue us with that mind "which was also in Christ Jesus"!

(3) *Strife, contention, disputation,* and *quarreling,* originating in an unholy temper, and conducted in a vainglorious or ambitious spirit, are forbidden by this law, and are inconsistent with Christian character, and hurtful to society. "Follow *peace* with all men" (Heb. xii. 14) is the gospel rule. And again: "Do all things without *murmurings* and *disputings.*" Phil. ii. 14. Again: "Let nothing be done through *strife* or vainglory." Phil. ii. 3. St. Paul also (2 Cor. xii. 20) speaks in condemnation of "envyings, *wraths, strifes,* backbitings, whisperings, *swellings, tumults,*" showing that all such things are uncongenial to the spirit of Christianity.

(4) In a word, this commandment prohibits all *injurious excess* tending to the enervation or destruction of the health, vigor, and activity of our bodily powers or mental faculties. This not only interdicts all drunkenness and dissipation, in the common acceptation of the term, but also excess in the use of food, in labor, in recreation, or amusement, or whatever would tend to impair the constitution, or deprive us of the possession of *mens sana in corpore sano*—a sound mind in a healthy body.

(5) Again, if we neglect the means which we believe to be essential to the preservation of our own lives, or the lives of others, and life is lost through that neglect, we are guilty of murder. If we see a blind man, unconscious of his danger, about to step over a precipice where he will inevitably be destroyed, and have it in our power to save his life, either by giving him timely warning, or by pulling him from the dan-

ger, and fail to do so, we are as really guilty of murder as though we had directly taken his life by our own overt act. "Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law!"

III. "THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY."

The sin here forbidden, embracing every violation of the laws of conjugal fidelity, and of chastity in general, will be considered in connection with the obligations pertaining to the conjugal relation. Hence we will not enter upon the subject in this connection.

IV. "THOU SHALT NOT STEAL."

Under the head of *theft*, as the term is here used, much more is implied than the overt act of stealing in the sense of the civil law. In a legal sense, *to steal* is to take from another his property, goods, money, or possessions, in a secret and fraudulent manner. It differs from robbery, in that the one is performed in a secret or hidden manner, and the other by violence or force.

But as the divine law penetrates more deeply, and scrutinizes more closely, than civil statutes can do, having cognizance of the secret thought as well as the overt act, it is understood here not only to forbid the crime of *theft*, in its literal, civil acceptation, but also *robbery*, the receiving of stolen property, knowing it to be such, all fraudulent dealing —using false weights and measures, removing landmarks, injustice or unfaithfulness in contracts between man and man, any breach of trust, any act of oppression, extortion, bribery, unjust and vexatious litigation, trespassing upon property, engrossing commodities so as to enhance the price, gaming, or any other method of taking from others their property or possessions, without due and adequate compensation for the same. How full and comprehensive is the law of God as here exhibited; and with what simplicity and beauty is it expressed by our Saviour in his golden rule of "doing to others as we would that they should do unto us"!

It may be a question of some doubt whether the crime of *slander* more properly falls under the condemnation of *this* or the *next* commandment, which prohibits false testimony. It seems clearly condemned by both precepts. As it speaks falsely against our neighbor, it is "bearing false witness," and is condemned by the *ninth* commandment; but as it thereby *steals* away his *good name*, which is "rather to be chosen than great riches," it properly comes under the head of *theft*. It is written: "Whoso privily *slandereth* his neighbor, him will I cut off." Ps. ci. 5. In describing wicked apostates who were to come, St. Paul gives it as one of their characteristics, that they will be found "speaking *lies* in hypocrisy." 1 Tim. iv. 2. And he says to the Ephesians

(iv. 31): "Let all evil speaking be put away from you." In describing the atrocities of the unconverted pagans, he characterizes them as "backbiters." Rom. i. 30. The crime of slander has been forcibly described in the familiar lines of the poet—

> "Good name in man or woman
> Is the immediate jewel of their souls
> Who *steals* my purse *steals* trash;
> But he that filches from me my good name
> Robs me of that which not enriches him,
> And makes me poor indeed."

"Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law!"

V. "THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR."

This, like all the other precepts of the divine law, grows out of the principle of *love*. Hence, as we should "love our neighbor as ourselves," we should take the same care to refrain from speaking so as to injure him, either in his property or reputation, as we would take in reference to ourselves.

This duty forbids, not only testifying falsely against our neighbor when called on to render legal evidence, but also condemns falsehood and deception in every shape. It prohibits forgery, concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause; all tale-bearing, whispering, detracting; all rash, harsh, and unjust censuring—it condemns all concealing, excusing, or extenuating sins, and all raising or circulating false rumors, and even all countenancing evil reports concerning our neighbor, whether true or false, when the object is, not to do good to others, but injury to him. "Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law!"

VI. "THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE, THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S WIFE, NOR HIS MAN-SERVANT, NOR HIS MAID-SERVANT, NOR HIS OX, NOR HIS ASS, NOR ANY THING THAT IS THY NEIGHBOR'S."

This commandment is directly opposed to that *love of the world* which is represented by St. John as inconsistent with the love of God. "If any man love the world," saith the apostle, "the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John ii. 15. To *covet*, is *earnestly to desire* or long after an object, that we may possess and enjoy it. It may be taken in a good sense, as in the passage, "Covet earnestly the best gifts;" but when it has for its object the property of our neighbor, and amounts to a desire unlawfully to possess that which belongs to another, it is founded in practical injustice, and is one of the most widely-extended and pernicious

sins. It is at the root of nearly all dishonesty and fraud. Indeed, it comprehends "the love of money," which, the apostle teaches, "is the root of all evil." 1 Tim. vi. 10. As an eminent author has said: "This is a most excellent moral precept, the observance of which will prevent all public crimes; for he who feels the force of the law that prohibits the inordinate desire of any thing that is the property of another, can never make a breach in the peace of society by an act of wrong to any of even its feeblest members." "Lord have mercy upon us, and write all these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER X.

Question 1. In what is our duty to our neighbor embraced?
2. How is this proved by both Christ and St. Paul?
3. What two things are here to be considered?
4. What is embraced in the scope of the sixth commandment?
5. What does it forbid?
6. When is *war* justifiable, and when is an *individual* justifiable for engaging in it?
7. Why does this law prohibit *dueling?*
8. Does it prohibit *suicide?* and wherefore?
9. What sins of less magnitude does this law prohibit?
10. What is included under the head of *theft?*
11. What under the head of *bearing false witness?*
12. What under the head of *covetousness?*

CHAPTER XI.

OUR DUTY TO OUR NEIGHBOR—APPLICATION OF THE LAW TO SPECIAL CASES AND CONDITIONS—HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

We now proceed to consider the principles of righteousness embraced in the law of love to our neighbor in their *application to some of the most important relations in life.*

I. The first of these RELATIONS to which we call attention is that subsisting between HUSBAND AND WIFE.

1. Its *propriety.*

(1) This relation dates its *origin* from the commencement of our race. Amid the peaceful bowers of paradise, when sin as yet had not disturbed the harmony or tarnished the beauty of the fair creation, when all was innocence, purity, and love, even *then*, "The Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." Gen. ii. 18.

Here, we behold the origin of this endearing relation, around which cluster the most sacred obligations and hallowed enjoyments of life. It is founded on the will and appointment of God, and is as much adapted to the nature of man as the rays of light to the eye. As this beautiful organ of the human body would be useless and unmeaning but for the light that falls upon it, so there are important faculties of our complex nature which can only be developed and exercised in connection with the conjugal relation.

When Eve was formed from the rib of Adam, it was said: "She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." It is added: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." Here, the fact that the material substance of which woman was formed was extracted from man indicates an imperfection of his nature resulting from that extraction, which could only be remedied by a restoration of the abstracted substance; not, however, in the shape of a literal rib, as when taken from him, but as a "help meet for him," a more highly-refined organism of human nature, which, after having received the

polish of passing the second time through the creative hands, was to be restored to him as "bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh." So that, in return for a small portion of his material composition, he receives as part of his nature a "help meet for him"—a woman, a wife—superabundantly restoring what he had lost, and enhancing the perfection of his nature and the extent of his enjoyment.

(2) The *propriety and general obligation* of this conjugal relation not only appear from the history of its origin, as just referred to, but are evident from the *native instincts of humanity.* The natural attraction of love between the sexes, independent of any direct precept to that effect, as a general rule, will secure the adoption of the marriage state. And as it does not appear that this obligation was intended to be *universal,* but only a duty of general bearing, admitting of exceptions, the instincts of nature alone are sufficient to secure its general observance.

(3) Again, the *exceptions* to the obligation to enter upon the marriage state may arise from two different considerations:

First. The bond of this obligation can only legitimately spring from the emotion of love, or the preference of the affections; hence it follows that in the absence of this state of affection between the parties, the entrance upon the marriage state, so far from being a duty, would rather be a profanation of the institution.

Secondly. Poverty, affliction, or any insurmountable barrier in the way of attending to the duties connected with the married relation, may render the entrance upon it improper. In times of great persecution or calamity, it may be injudicious for some persons to assume the increased responsibilities which this relation involves; or individuals, as was the case with St. Paul, may feel it their duty to engage in some special service for the Church, which could scarcely be properly performed by one encumbered by the duties and cares of the married relation. But, under all ordinary circumstances, it is clear, as well from reason as Scripture, that marriage is a duty, and those cases in which it is not are *exceptions* to the general rule; and such exceptions are only valid when it is clear that this important relation would necessarily conflict with other obligations more important in their nature, or imperiously binding in their character.

2. The *advantages* resulting from the marriage institution are so obvious and great that they need not be dwelt upon. Without the family relation necessarily connected with this institution, all the cherished endearments clustering around the home circle, uniting parents and children, and brothers and sisters, in fondest affection, would be lost.

Destroy this sacred institution, and the foundation of parental care for children is removed, and all that tender attention and nurture so essential to the proper training of the young is also destroyed, and children are left to grow up, like "the wild ass's colt," in utter neglect and ignorance, unfitted for the enjoyment of happiness, or for any station of usefulness in society.

3. *The duties pertaining to the conjugal state* are important and obvious.

(1) *Mutual fidelity and affection* are required. This grows out of the very nature of the institution. Indeed, if husband and wife are not under mutual obligations of fidelity and affection toward each other, in what does the import or propriety of marriage consist? The very nature of marriage implies a pledge to this effect, and every dereliction from the faithful performance of this vow is a profanation of the institution.

Not only the nature and design of the institution require mutual fidelity and love on the part of husband and wife, binding each to the other alone, and prohibiting the practice of *polygamy*, but such is also the plain teaching of the Bible. Hence we read, in the second chapter of Genesis, at the very birth of the institution: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and *shall cleave unto his wife;* and they shall be *one flesh.*" It does not read *wives*, but *wife*—in the singular; hence, polygamy is here explicitly interdicted.

And it is evident, from the teaching of Christ, that the occasional toleration, or rather *sufferance*, of polygamy, in the patriarchal age, was no repeal of the laws of the institution as given in the commencement.

Our Saviour says, when interrogated by his disciples on the subject of divorce: "Have ye not read, that he which made them *at the beginning* made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and *shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh?* Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives; but *from the beginning it was not so.* And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." Matt. xix. 4–9.

The general tenor of Scripture in both Testaments is against polyg-

amy. The marriage relation is constantly referred to by the terms *husband* and *wife*, each in the *singular*. One passage, in confirmation of this position, we present from the Old Testament: "Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the *wife* of thy youth, against whom thou has dealt treacherously; yet is *she* thy *companion*, and the *wife* of thy covenant. And did not he make *one* (one woman)? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore *one?*" The answer is, "That he might seek a godly seed." Here the practice of polygamy is shown to be in explicit contravention of the original institution. And the *reason* on which the law is founded is referred to as relating to the character of the offspring, thus affirming the fact that polygamy tends to the deterioration of children.

Again, *nature herself* is against polygamy. The generally admitted fact, that the number of *male* births in all countries is only to a small extent in excess of the number of *female* births (as if to balance against the greater exposure of the male sex to death by war and other casualties), is a forcible indication that nature has designed but *one woman* for *one man*, while both are living.

Once more, the fact that marriage is properly founded on mutual love between the parties—which, in its true character, can only subsist in the heart of woman or man toward *one person* at the same time—renders polygamy utterly irreconcilable with the nature of the requisite conjugal affection.

Marriage being originally an appointment of God, and the duties pertaining to that relation being prescribed in Scripture, it is properly a *divine* institution. But since civil law may enact regulations concerning the performance of these duties, so far as these regulations are consistent with the divine law, and relate to external duties properly cognizable by civil enactments, it may therefore be admitted that marriage is also, in one sense, and to a limited extent, a *civil* regulation.

In connection with the mutual fidelity and affection required by the law of God between husband and wife may be considered the crime of *adultery*, which is so expressly prohibited by this law, whether as set forth in the Decalogue or other parts of the Scripture; and also all manner of inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, fornication, sinful lust, and every violation of that purity and chastity of heart and life which Christianity enjoins. All such deviations from the principles of holiness, whether in the overt act or only in the purpose or desire of the heart, are expressly condemned by the moral law of God.

(2) But between *husband and wife* there are other obligations of kindred nature specified in Scripture. Thus it is the duty of the husband to be the *guardian, protector,* and *comforter* of his wife; and of the wife to *reverence, honor,* and *obey* her husband.

These reciprocal duties are beautifully portrayed by St. Paul. He illustrates the endearing relation between husband and wife by the union between Christ and his Church. His language is: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church; and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it. . . . So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church. . . . For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife; and they two shall be one flesh. . . . Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife, even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." Eph. v. 22–33.

Here the *husband* is taught to *love, nourish,* and *cherish* his wife as his own flesh, "even as Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it." How intimate the relation, and how great the affection it enjoins!

But the *wife* is taught to *reverence* and be *submissive* to her husband; yea, "to be subject to her own husband in every thing, as the Church is subject unto Christ." How deep must be the reverence, and how unbounded the confidence, where such implicit submission is required! But where the union is founded upon that mutual love which should hallow the conjugal bond, there is no disquieting restraint, nothing displeasing or servile in connection with these duties, but all becomes a sweet and living pleasure—a perennial source of enjoyment and bliss.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XI.

QUESTION 1. Under what circumstances did the conjugal relation originate?
2. By what do the propriety and obligation of this relation appear?
3. Is the obligation to enter upon this *relation* universal?
4. By what circumstances may this obligation be annulled?
5. What are some of the benefits of this relation?
6. What are the prominent duties connected with it?
7. What is the Bible testimony respecting polygamy?
8. What is the voice of nature on the subject?
9. In what respect is marriage a *divine*, and in what sense a *civil*, institution?
10. What is embraced in the law against adultery?
11. How is the marriage relation illustrated by St. Paul?
12. What are the reciprocal duties of husbands and wives?

CHAPTER XII.

OUR DUTY TO OUR NEIGHBOR—APPLICATION OF THE LAW TO SPECIAL CASES AND CONDITIONS—PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

We next consider the relation subsisting between parents and children. This is another domestic relation, intimately connected with the one already examined, pertaining to husband and wife.

I. Duties of parents to their children.

Although some of these duties grow so naturally out of the relation itself that they may be partially discovered by the mere light of nature, and all of them, when correctly understood, may be corroborated by human reason, yet as revelation, our only all-sufficient and infallible guide, is full and explicit upon this important question, we appeal directly to that more ample and authoritative source.

1. *Protection and support are duties of parents to their children.*

That these obligations were recognized under the patriarchal dispensation is evident from Scripture. Jacob said to Laban: "For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming; and now, *when shall I provide for mine own house also?*" Gen. xxx. 30. St. Paul says to Timothy: "But if any *provide not for his own*, and specially for *those of his own house*, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." 1 Tim. v. 8.

The plain duty of parents, to protect and exercise a tender care over their children, and to provide for their comfortable support, is abundantly taught in the scriptures adduced. It is not only a dictate of nature, taught by the love of parents for their offspring, and enforced even by the instinctive regard of the inferior animal creation for their young, but it forms so essential an element in Christian character that he who neglects or disregards it is denounced as having "denied the faith," and being "worse than an infidel"—that is, he is to be contemned as unworthy the Christian name; hence every parent is bound to the full discharge of this obligation, to the extent of his ability. While he is not allowed by Christianity to lavish upon his children superflu-

ities, or to deal his bounty toward them with an extravagant or wasteful hand, yet he should use his utmost diligence and industry to furnish them all necessary protection, support, and comfort.

2. *Love is another important parental duty.*

This duty is not only enforced by one of the strongest dictates of nature, but it is frequently referred to in Scripture. The prophet exclaims: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" Isa. xlix. 15. And the Psalmist says: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Ps. ciii. 13. Again, the same idea of the tender compassion of the parental heart is thus expressed by the prophet: "And I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Mal. iii. 17. Again, how forcibly does our Saviour refer to the strength of this parental affection, when he demands: "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone?' etc. Luke xi. 11.

That the Scriptures do not so much command the duty of parental affection, in express words, as refer to it as a matter whose existence is not to be questioned, renders the obligation but the more palpable, and marks the crime of a parent who may fail in the discharge of this duty as one of the deepest dye.

3. *The next duty of parents to their children which we shall notice, is that of their training and education.*

That God, under all dispensations, holds parents to strict responsibility for the training and education of their children is evident from the Scriptures.

In the eighteenth chapter of Genesis, Abraham is highly commended of the Lord for the strict religious discipline by which he *commanded* and controlled "his children and his household after him."

In delivering the law to the Israelites, Moses enjoined upon parents the duty of attending rigidly to the training of their children. His language is: "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart; and thou shall teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Deut. vi. 6, 7.

In attestation of the importance of this duty, the wise man has given us this proverb: "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Prov. xxii. 6.

St. Paul enjoins upon parents to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. vi. 4.

The religious training of Timothy, traced back first to his mother Eunice, and then to his grandmother Lois, is referred to by St. Paul as a great blessing (2 Tim. i. 5; iii. 15).

It is a matter of vast importance that we have correct views in reference to the nature of that education and training which it is the duty of parents to bestow upon their children. Education implies the development and culture of our *physical*, *intellectual*, and *moral* powers. When its benefits are fully realized, the utmost attainable perfection and fruition of our complex nature are secured. In the common mode of speech, education is understood to relate almost exclusively to the scientific and literary training derived from schools. But while we would by no means depreciate that species of education constituting the principal part of academic and collegiate instruction, it must be admitted that it can be but secondary to moral and religious culture Science, in the common import of that term, is chiefly, if not solely, valuable as being a handmaid to religion. It is the lesser light borrowing, like the moon from the sun, her paler rays from revelation; and should be pursued as tending to promote religion, and *so* pursued that it may tend in that way.

In our original creation, the hand of God hath stamped upon the constitution of our nature the deep impress of immortality. This tenement of clay is ever tending to dissolution and the tomb, but the soul kindles with the glowing pledge of its immortality. This life is but the commencement of our existence. Compared with the immense expanse of eternity, it is far less than the mote which floats in the sunbeam. It is but a microscopic speck amid the boundless universe. *Can* it be wisdom to attend to the present short-lived moment, the transient *now*, to the neglect of the infinite future? to become dazzled and overwhelmed with the gewgaws of a moment, while all that is truly great, or noble, or real, or lasting, or good, is overlooked or despised? It is our great business in this life to prepare for happiness in a future and eternal state. Our chief end is "to glorify God, and enjoy him forever."

But what, we inquire, is the character of that training essential to the attainment of this glorious consummation? The answer is at hand. It is mainly the *training of the heart*. It relates to the principles, the experience, and the practice of true religion. By this we mean not a mere culture of the head, but also a purification of the heart and regulation of the life. If we fail in securing this culture, what training soever we may receive beside, we are only trained up for the society of fiends and the wailings of the finally lost. On the other hand, if we secure this moral and religious culture in its proper and full sense,

whatsoever training we may lack beside, the grand purpose of our being will be realized, the high birthright of our nature—a blissful immortality—will be secured.

In proportion to its intrinsic and acknowledged importance, Christian parents generally are far more deficient in attention to the moral and religious culture of their children than in any other department of their education. In this respect, Christians of the present day were far excelled by the ancient people of God. Around the family hearth the pious Jew from night to night assembled his offspring, while he read from the book of the law, expounded the sacred institutions of the true religion, and taught them the worship of the true God. The Jewish child was trained up to know "the God of his father," and to revere his religion.

If we search the records of pagan antiquity, or examine the history of modern idolatrous worshipers, they *too*, in their unfailing and rigid attention to the religious training of their children, may shame the Christian world. It is painfully humiliating to be constrained to believe that, with many Christian parents, while great concern is evinced that their children be well educated in the sense in which a vain, ungodly world understands the subject, that the intellect be stored with mere scientific knowledge, so little pains are taken to secure their moral and religious culture. If they would secure for their sons or daughters distinction and preëminence, in reference to this world, they spare neither time, nor money, nor effort; but, if *their* children are ever to become illustrious in the sphere of moral and religious influence, in many cases it must be independent of all parental exertion—the heart of the child is left a moral waste, while the parent, it would seem, expects his offspring to become religious by intuition.

The great practical question before us is: By what means may the proper religious training of the children of the Church be secured? Some may suppose that, as we have the Sunday-school among us, it will serve the purpose of religious training better than any thing else to which we can resort. If all the children of Christian parents were regularly in the Sunday-school, as those schools are generally conducted, their religious training would even then be far from being properly secured. The Sunday-school is a noble, a Heaven-blest institution; but still it cannot supersede an efficient, general system of religious training.

But what is the particular kind of training needed? and by what means may it best be secured? The Holy Bible is unquestionably the volume to which we must appeal. Within its sacred lids are contained

the lessons which are able to make us "wise unto salvation." This is the foundation on which we must build for all *real* happiness here, and for eternal felicity hereafter. It is Heaven's directory to man for the cure of moral evil. It contains the only authentic antidote against sin, and the only accredited pledge of God's love to the world. But how may we succeed in imbuing the minds and hearts of the rising generation with the important *facts*, the pure *precepts*, and the sublime *doctrines* of revelation?

We would recommend the following plan: Let the children in each family be formed into a Bible-class; give them appropriate books; assign to them suitable lessons, and let them be examined and instructed by the parent once or twice each week—let the time now wasted in idleness, or devoted to unprofitable conversation or vain amusement, be consecrated to the study of the sublime principles of our holy religion —let each "preacher in charge" see that the children of his pastorate are regularly classed, and diligently instructed, in Bible truth—let a senior Bible-class, for the edification of the members, be organized in each society—let the Sunday-school superintendents, teachers, and more advanced scholars, be included in this class—let them meet once a week, under the direction of the preacher, or some suitable person selected by him. By the adoption and diligent prosecution of this course, our churches will be filled with an intelligent membership, who will *read*, and *study*, and *think*, and *do*, as well as *feel*. Our Sunday-schools will always be abundantly furnished with well-qualified teachers. Thus, every minister may enter upon a field the most interesting and promising, and, at the same time, the most favorable to his own improvement; and become, according to the primitive custom of the Church, a *practical* teacher of religion, having his disciples and catechumen under his charge.

Thus every child may be taught, not only the geography of his State, but the geography of the kingdom of Immanuel—not only the grammar of his mother-tongue, but the grammar of the Holy Ghost—not only the philosophy of nature, but the philosophy of grace—not only the history of the United States and other countries, and the biography of Cesar, of Bonaparte, of La Fayette, and Washington; but also the history of the Jewish and Christian Churches, and the biography of Abraham and of Moses, of David and of Daniel, of Paul and of John, and of the blessed Saviour of the world.

Once more: Let the Bible be introduced as a text-book, and its sacred truths taught as a science in all our schools and colleges. Text-books are introduced, and classes formed, and diligently instructed and daily

examined on the sciences of history, mythology, chemistry, geology, astronomy, etc.; but why not on the science of theology? Where is the book comparable to the Bible? Where is the science so valuable as that whose principles it embodies? As a history, the Bible is worth all the other books in the world. It carries us back to the commencement of time, and records the birth of creation—it narrates the circumstances of the Fall, and unfolds the redemption of man—it describes the manners and customs of the most ancient and most remarkable people, and exhibits the wonderful interposition of God in their protection and deliverance. As a system of doctrines, it reveals the most sublime and important truths, and presents the clearest and most impressive illustrations. As a code of morals, it transcends all human effort. It teaches us what we are, whence we came, and what we should be—it unfolds both our duty and destiny—it pours upon our dreary pathway through life a heavenly illumination to direct our footsteps, and cheers our anxious hearts with the hopes of a blissful immortality.

And what good reason, we ask, can be offered in opposition to thus teaching the Bible in schools? Are the minds of the young to be carefully and diligently stored with all science but that which is divine, and all knowledge but that which comes from God? Must the fabulous legends of Homer, the obscene pages of Horace, the blood-stained commentaries of Cesar, be the every-day study of our youth? but the annals of Moses, the epic of Job, the pastorals of David, the sublime poems of Isaiah, the irresistible logic of Paul, the angelic ethics of John, and the divine philosophy of Jesus—are *these* to be interdicted? Must *they* be thrust aside, or only brought incidentally to view? Is it *right* to teach heathen philosophy and pagan mythology in our schools and colleges? but is it *wrong* to introduce Christian philosophy and Bible theology? Surely the Christian parent must feel that he is bound, by all the sacred obligations of religion, to train his children, not only for *this* world, but also for the *next*—not only with a knowledge of human science, but with a knowledge of God and of religion.

4. *It is the duty of parents to govern their children.*

This parental obligation is necessarily implied in the Scripture injunction: "Children, obey your parents." Thus it is not only founded, on divine precept, but is necessarily inferable from the relation subsisting between parents and children. The helplessness and dependency of the child render it incapable of governing itself; and both nature and revelation designate the parent as the appropriate person for the performance of this duty.

In considering the character of parental government, the following particulars may be noted as matters of importance:

First. It should *commence in early childhood.*

As soon as reason dawns, or the child is capable of understanding a command, it should be taught to obey. Commencing at this period, and with watchful solicitude persevering with a constant and undeviating course, the obligation and habit of obedience may be easily impressed and secured; and, unless the child be first taught the lesson of strict and unvarying obedience to its parents, there can be little hope of success in teaching it any thing else that is good.

Secondly. Parental government should be exercised with *uniformity.*

Fickleness and unsteadiness on the part of parents will soon destroy their control over their children. To be strict or careless, severe or lenient, by turns, as whim, caprice, or humor, may happen to dictate, is the course for the parent to adopt if he would teach the child to despise all parental authority and control.

Thirdly. This duty should be exercised with *discretion.*

The parent should not make too many rules, or require too much. He should give *advice*, or *counsel*, when it is proper, and issue his *command* only when it is necessary. Parental government should be *administered in love*, and with reference to the good of the child.

A mild, gentle, and steady course, mingling reason and instruction with authority and command, if adopted by the parent, will seldom fail to secure the blessing of filial love and obedience; whereas, if parents manifest, in the control of their children, a severe, tyrannical manner, or a turbulent temper, they will thereby "provoke them to wrath," instead of "bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

II. *The duties of children to their parents* will next be considered.

This is expressly enjoined in the fifth commandment: "Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Ex. xx. 12. Our Saviour has repeated this commandment, and strongly enforced this duty (Matt. xv. 4). St. Paul has also commented upon it, styling it "the first commandment with promise" (Eph. vi. 2)—that is, with a promise *expressed;* for, doubtless, a promise is *implied* in connection with each commandment.

The term *honor*, as used in this precept, is to be understood in an enlarged sense, as embracing the *entire* duty of children to parents; indeed, it is generally construed, and properly so, we think, as covering the whole ground of the duties growing out of the relation subsisting between *inferiors* and *superiors*. And, in this extended application, it

not only includes the duties of children to parents, but of parents to children, of masters to servants, and of servants to masters; and of those high in station or office to the humble and obscure, and *vicè versa.*

We now, however, speak specially of the duties of children to their parents. As *love* is "the fulfilling of the law," of course that term comprehends this entire duty; but it may be more specifically considered

1. It implies *gratitude.*

As no duty of children to their parents can be conceived more rational and imperative than that of gratitude, so no crime can be more detestable, or is more severely condemned in Scripture, than that of filial *ingratitude.* In reference to this sin, our Lord, quoting from the law (Ex. xxi. 15–17), says: "He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death." Matt. xv. 4. What can be more unnatural or revolting to all the better feelings of humanity than for children to forget, or not cherish with deepest emotions of gratitude and affection, the remembrance of that parental care and solicitude which watched over the helplessness and dependency of their infancy and childhood? Filial ingratitude can only find room in a heart bereft of all lovely and virtuous emotion.

2. *Another duty of children to parents is obedience.*

The Bible precept on this subject is most explicit. St. Paul says: "Children, *obey* your parents in the Lord; for this is right." Eph. vi. 1. And again: "Children, *obey your parents in all things;* for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord." Col. iii. 20. From these scriptures we learn that this requirement of obedience is *universal,* with but *one exception*—it is to be "in the Lord"—that is, the obligation *to obey* becomes void when the requirement is contrary to the law of God. In such cases, the apostolic maxim, "We ought to *obey God* rather than *men,*" should be observed; but this exception to the rule can only apply when children are of age and discretion to judge for themselves concerning the divine law. With this single exception, the obligation on children to obey their parents is universal and imperative; and this obedience should be rendered in a ready, docile, and cheerful spirit and manner.

Should parents, however, be so tyrannical and unreasonable as to require their children to engage in a matrimonial alliance with persons for whom they cannot have that esteem and love which the conjugal vow requires; or, should they so exercise authority over their children as to infringe upon that liberty of conscience on the subject of religion which is the scriptural birthright of children as well as parents—in such cases, as obedience to parents would involve disobedience to God, it ceases to be the duty of children.

The exceptions to the law requiring filial obedience are few, and of seldom occurrence. The child should never disobey the parent till, after mature consideration, and having counseled with judicious friends, the conviction is clear in his own mind that the parental command requires what is contrary to the command of God.

3. *Reverence for parents is another filial duty.*

This is clearly implied by the letter of the law itself: "Honor thy father and thy mother." As nothing can be more unnatural, so no sin is more ignominious, in the view of all virtuous minds, than that of irreverence or disrespect for parents. This reverence for parents, however, should be distinguished from a servile fear or dread. It should be mixed with confiding esteem and love.

Children should be slow to observe the faults and infirmities of their parents. By kind, respectful words, by gentle and submissive behavior —indeed, in their entire demeanor—they should evince that they look up to their parents as their superiors. When children forget to respect their parents, they *themselves* lose the respect of all the better class of society, and seldom fail to bring upon themselves degradation and ruin. How full of meaning is the exhortation of the apostle, "Honor thy father and mother; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth"! Significantly was it written by Solomon: "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." Prov. xxx. 17.

4. *Protection, support, and comfort,* in seasons of affliction and amid the infirmities of age, are emphatically due from children to parents. This is clearly inferable from the general tenor of Scripture. It flows necessarily from the great law of love—it is embodied in our Saviour's precept of doing to others as we would that they should do to us. Indeed, such is the extent under which children are indebted to their parents, that, when they do all in their power to bless, comfort, and provide for them, in every hour of affliction and need, they never can fully repay what they owe. Hard and fiend-like must be the heart of that child who can witness the want of a father or mother, and fail to extend every possible relief. If both nature and Scripture dictate that parents, when they can, should "lay up for their children," the same considerations require that children, when their parents are needy or afflicted, should render them all the comfort and assistance in their power.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XII.

QUESTION 1. Whence may we learn the duties of parents and children?
2. What is implied in the *first* parental duty specified, and by what scriptures is it established?
3. The *second*, and how is it proved?
4. What is the *third* duty of parents named, and how is it proved?
5. How may it best be performed?
6. The *fourth*, and how should it be performed?
7. How is the *first* duty of children to parents proved and illustrated?
8. The *second*?
9. The *third*?
10. The *fourth*?

CHAPTER XIII.

OUR DUTY TO OUR NEIGHBOR — APPLICATION OF THE LAW TO SPECIAL CASES AND CONDITIONS—RULERS AND SUBJECTS.

In a political or civil sense, whether the governing power be styled *emperor*, *king*, *monarch*, *sovereign*, *president*, *governor*, *ruler*, *judge*, or *patriarch*, there are important *duties* pertaining to this political relation obligatory on both the *rulers* and the *persons ruled*. Although we have no evidence that the people of any country ever assembled *en masse* to form a civil compact, and so originate a government by formal stipulation between the *governors* and the *governed*, yet, in the nature of things, it is theoretically assumed that such a compact, by tacit implication, exists in all political establishments. Both the parties concerned possess distinct and separate *rights*, and out of these rights grow reciprocal *obligations*.

All civil governments are commonly embraced in four classes the *monarchical*, the *aristocratic*, the *republican* or *democratic*, and the *mixed*.

In a *monarchy*, the governing power is in the hands of a *single person*, usually styled *emperor*, *king*, or *autocrat;* in an *aristocracy*, this power is in the hands of the *nobility*, or *principal persons* of the State; in a *republic* or *democracy*, this power resides in *the people*, and is exercised either in their *collective capacity*, or through their *representatives;* a *mixed government* partakes to some extent of *more than one* of the preceding characteristics.

But, whatever may be the *form* of government, there are important duties growing out of this relation to which we call attention.

I. We notice the duties of rulers.

These grow out of certain important inherent *rights* which all men are supposed to possess, and which the government to which they submit is bound to protect and defend. The principal of these rights are those of "*personal security, personal liberty, and private property.*" In the possession of these, the government, or rulers, are bound to protect the citizens.

1. *It is the duty of the government to extend to all its subjects personal security.*

This implies the preservation of the person of each individual from the lawless, violent, or injurious attacks, of all persons whatsoever. It cannot be supposed that any government is capable of extending this protection, *absolutely* and *perfectly*, to all its subjects — this would require the governing powers to possess all the attributes of omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence, none of which can pertain to any being but God; none but he *can* be everywhere present, beholding the evil and the good, and possess the wisdom and power sufficient to prevent every injurious or violent act which vicious persons may be disposed to perpetrate in reference to their fellows. All that civil rulers *can* do is. to enact wholesome laws for the protection of all the rights of the people, and to see that these laws are not only sanctioned by adequate penalties, but administered and executed with due fairness and impartiality, and with as little delay as possible. When *this* is done, each citizen possesses a reasonable assurance that the ruling power to whose authority he submits, not only respects and looks after his rights, but that, when they are infringed or violated, it provides an adequate remedy for the redress of the wrong; and thus he is furnished by his government with all that *personal security* which the nature of the case admits. More than this the government *could not* bestow, but this much it is *bound* to extend.

2. *Personal Liberty.*—Several important items are embraced in that *personal liberty* which it is the duty of all good governments to secure to its subjects.

(1) The freedom of *locomotion*, or the right of *transit* from one part of the country to another, is a privilege which should be denied to none, except as a punishment for crime. As God has bestowed upon all men this power of travel, and as it contributes greatly to the well-being and happiness of society, and as government is ordained and sanctioned, not as an engine of oppression, but as an instrument of good to the community, it follows that it is the duty of those who bear rule to secure to every subject the right of passing at will from one portion of the country to another, and to fix his residence wherever choice or interest may dictate, provided he interfere not with the rights of others.

(2) Another right which it is the duty of the government to secure to each citizen is, the *pursuit of happiness*, by engaging in any lawful calling, business, or profession, he may select. In a good government, exclusive privileges or monopolies should not be conferred on corporations, or individuals, to the general detriment of the commu-

nity. Restrictive regulations are only proper when it is clear that the general welfare will be promoted thereby.

(3) Government should secure to its subjects *liberty of conscience.* By this we mean the right of every man to the free and orderly expression of his opinions on all subjects, whether political or religious; provided he infringes no law, produces no riot or disturbance, and does not molest others in the enjoyment of their rights.

As religion is a concern between each individual and his Maker, nothing can be more incongruous and absurd than for one class of persons to prescribe a system of faith, or mode of worship, for the rest; nor can it be at all admissible for rulers to interpose between their subjects and God, so as to interfere with the rights of conscience.

Conscience, it is true, is often not well informed, and, in such cases, is not an infallible guide; yet it is also true that no man has a right to act contrary to the dictates of his conscience, nor can he do so without incurring guilt. The criminality of all wrong actions, which are performed in accordance with the dictates of conscience, results *solely* from the fact that the individual has sinfully neglected the means of enlightening his conscience.

Since, then, no one can act in violation of his conscience without incurring guilt, it results from the same principle of reasoning, that it would be tyrannical and wrong for any civil government not to protect its citizens in the full exercise of liberty of conscience. In the political systems of all Protestant countries these sacred rights are now well secured; and, in view of the rapid progress of liberal principles characterizing the present age, we may reasonably hope that the day is at hand when all men in all lands will be secured in the inestimable right of freedom of faith and speech, and allowed, without fear or intimidation, to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences.

3. The right of *private property.*

This should be secured by government to every citizen. This right is not only in manifest accordance with nature, but is plainly recognized in Scripture. The divine law, forbidding *theft, robbery, fraud,* and *dishonesty,* in every shape, presupposes the right of property; for these sins are but specifications of the various methods of violating that right.

It is not to be supposed that any code of human laws, however judiciously framed or faithfully administered, can extend to every citizen complete protection in the right of his property. Such is the cunning craftiness of wicked, dishonest men, that, while fraudulently filching from the hand of honest industry the fruit of its labor, they will find many ways of evading the best of human laws, and of escaping the

penalty they justly deserve; but it is the duty of rulers to do all in their power to protect the owner of property in his possessions. In this way governors should be "for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well." 1 Pet. ii. 14.

It is not only the prerogative, but the duty, of civil government, with solicitous care, to use all appropriate means to promote the peace, safety, prosperity, and happiness of the people. This will include treaties of amity and commerce with foreign States, the regulation of trade, and the mutual exchange of commodities at home, the encouragement of the arts and sciences, of agriculture and manufactures, of industry and economy, of sobriety and good order, and especially of education, morality, and religion. A State which looks with indifference upon these interests must be greatly derelict in duty, and those functionaries intrusted with the management and control of her affairs will have a fearful account to render for the neglect of the welfare and happiness of the people over whom, in the providence of God, they have been placed as rulers.

II. THE DUTIES OF CITIZENS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

1. *Submission to the civil authorities, and obedience to the laws*, is a prime duty of every citizen.

On this subject St. Paul says: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake." Rom. xiii. 1–5.

The submission and implicit obedience to the authority of civil rulers here inculcated by the apostle, are rendered imperative by two considerations: *First.* Without this submission and obedience there can be no civil government, and civil government is essential to the general good of society. *Secondly.* Civil government is "of God"—that is, it exists by his sanction, and according to his providence. Hence, according to this general principle, he that resisteth the civil authority "resisteth the ordinance of God."

But, it may be asked, is *rebellion* against the civil government under

whose auspices, in the providence of God, our lot has been cast, never justifiable?

To this we reply—

(1) No personal *immorality, imbecility,* or *bad conduct,* on the part of rulers, while the constitution is maintained in good faith, can justify rebellion. The *personal* character of a ruler is one thing, and his *official* character is another thing. He may be immoral and profligate in his private life, and yet comparatively a good civil ruler; or he may be unimpeachable in his private character, and tyrannical and unsafe as a civil ruler. For his *private conduct* he is amenable to *God;* but, for his *official acts,* to the *constitution* and the *people* over whom he holds dominion.

(2) The cases in which rebellion against the authorities of civil government *may be justifiable,* are exceedingly rare; yet they sometimes do occur. Rebellion is a remedy so terrible in its character and consequences, that it should never be resorted to except in cases of extreme necessity, and after all milder means of redress have been tried in vain. Rebellion is never justifiable when the evils proposed to be remedied are less than those which rebellion would be likely to involve. In such cases, *great* evils had better be borne for a season, rather than incur *greater* evils by attempting their removal.

It may be safe to conclude—

First. When rulers are attempting to subvert the *constitution,* and to overthrow the liberties of the people by usurpation, it may be justifiable in the people to resist that usurpation—yea, it would be their *duty* to arise in their majesty and hurl the usurpers from their places of authority, and thus preserve intact the constitution, which is the great sheet-anchor of their sacred rights.

Secondly. When the government itself has become so corrupt, or the constitution so defective, that the endurance of the existing state of things would be a greater evil than the probable calamities of revolution—in such case, if there be a reasonable probability that revolution may be conducted to a successful issue, and a better government established, *then* it would not only be a *justifiable* act, but one demanded by the noble impulses of manhood and true patriotism, for the people to rise in rebellion against a corrupt government or tyrannical usurpation, and thus mutually pledge to each other "their lives, fortune, and sacred honor," while issuing their solemn declaration of freedom and independence.

2. *Patriotism,* or love of our country, is a duty incumbent on every citizen. The same natural tie that binds to the love of family, kindred,

and home, originates the obligation and suggests the impulse of patriotism. How deep, yet how manly, was this feeling in the heart of the exiled Jew—"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy"! Ps. cxxxvii. 5, 6. And how full of more than patriotic emotion must have been the heart of St. Paul, when he exclaimed: "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh"! Rom. ix. 2, 3.

The same patriotic emotion has been beautifully described by the poet:

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!"

The duty of patriotism is manifested by doing all in our power to sustain our institutions, and promote the prosperity of our country. This requires us—

(1) To contribute our *means*. The apostle says: "For this cause pay ye tribute also. . . . Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." Rom. xiii. 6, 7.

(2) This duty requires *respect* and *reverence* for our rulers. "Curse not the king, nc, not in thy thought" (Eccl. x. 20), is the admonition of Solomon. St. Paul quotes from Moses: "Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." Acts xxiii. 5. The ruler of the people is styled "the minister of God;" hence he is worthy of due *reverence*, for his office' sake.

(3) It is the duty of every citizen to offer *prayer* for his rulers, and for the prosperity of his country. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Ps. cxxii. 6), is the exhortation of David. St. Paul teaches us to pray "for kings, and for all that are in authority." 1 Tim. ii. 2. The propriety and utility of this scriptural duty must be manifest to every serious, reflecting mind. It tends to preserve a continual memory of our indebtedness to God for the gracious providence which confers upon us all our social, political, and religious blessings, and to teach us our dependence upon him for their continuance.

Having considered, in its different phases, our duty to our neighbor, both in reference to its general principles and its application to specific conditions or relations in life, we inquire, in conclusion, *how this important duty may be performed.*

We reply, that mere unassisted nature is inadequate either fully to impart the knowledge of this duty, or to enable us to perform it when understood. As, without revelation, we may grope forever in the dark, unable to learn correctly what our duty to our neighbor implies, so, without the aid of divine grace and the influence of the Holy Spirit, our utmost efforts for the proper performance of that duty will be fruitless. As "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," so no man can do those things which the law of God requires, but through the aid of that Holy Spirit which God has promised to impart, in virtue of the atonement of Christ, to all them that believe.

When we consider that the divine "commandment is exceeding broad," not only requiring uprightness of conduct, but extending to the thoughts of the heart, and at the same time reflect on our utter helplessness and depravity, we may well exclaim: "Who is sufficient for these things?" But when we think of the fullness of the promise of divine grace, we may say, with the apostle, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XIII.

QUESTION 1. Into what kinds may civil governments be divided?

2. What are the principal duties of rulers?

3. Is conscience an infallible guide to duty?

4. Can we violate its dictates without guilt?

5. Can civil government extend absolute protection to every citizen as to his rights?

6. What, then, is the duty of governors?

7. To what extent is the subject bound to obey the civil rulers?

8. Is rebellion ever justifiable? and if so, under what circumstances?

9. Do the Scriptures sanction the virtue of patriotism?

10. By what means may we be able to perform our whole duty?

CHAPTER XIV.

CHRISTIAN CONSECRATION.

THE great duty unfolded in this chapter, in strictness of speech, is comprised in our duty both to God and to our neighbor. We present it as a fundamental principle of Christian morals, that *every Christian, by uniting with the Church, enters upon a solemn promise and pledge to submit to its order and discipline, and to consecrate to the cause of God and to the interests of the kingdom of Christ his diligent and faithful service, devoting thereto, after "providing for his own household," his time, talents, labors, and substance.*

The principle involved in this proposition is one of the most fearfully neglected and overlooked, and at the same time one of the most vitally important, matters connected with the morals of Christianity. It is mainly owing to the neglect of this principle that the cause of Christianity has made comparatively so little progress in the world; and it is by the revival and restoration of this principle to its primitive, scriptural position and influence, that a new era shall one day dawn upon the Church, and the world shall be converted to God; hence it will appear of very great importance that we examine carefully the authority upon which the proposition rests and the sense in which it is to be understood and applied.

I. The AUTHORITY for the principle of Christian consecration to the cause of God, as well as the sense in which the doctrine is to be understood and applied, rests on the example of the first Christian Churches, under the organization of the apostles, and numerous scriptures to the same effect.

1. In the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we learn that "all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need. And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart."

In Acts iv. 32–35 we read as follows: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of

them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common. . . . Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of houses or lands sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

We see here a picture of the spirit with which the first Christians at Jerusalem consecrated themselves and their substance to the cause of God. All this occurred under the eye, and with the approving coöperation, of the apostles. It is not, however, contended that the example here exhibited, so far as a *community of goods* is concerned, was intended as a precedent for the imitation of the Church in after time. The reverse is evident from the fact that this plan was not adopted in any of the other Churches, and it lasted but a short period at Jerusalem; but yet there are some parts of this history that do exhibit the conduct of these first Christians in the light of an example. They gave "to all men as every man had need." "Neither was there any among them that lacked." These expressions show that the object in disposing of their possessions was to supply the wants of the needy. To this they were impelled by the principles of that gospel they had received. Perhaps, under their circumstances, this object could in no other way be so well accomplished. If so, we see their obligation to do as they did.

But a change of circumstances, rendering a community of goods inexpedient, cannot release from the obligation to relieve the needy. The principle of deadness to the world and love for Christ and his followers still remains the same. Actuated by the same heavenly principle, we are bound to be willing, as circumstances may require, to make sacrifices equally great.

2. But we proceed to show that the principle of entire consecration to the cause of God, so illustriously exhibited by these first Christians, is abundantly taught in various parts of the Scriptures.

Hear some of the words of our Lord: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." Matt. vi. 19.

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Matt. vi. 24.

"I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Luke xvi. 9.

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Matt. xix. 24.

St. Paul says: "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7.

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Gal. vi. 10.

"Godliness with contentment is great gain; for we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." 1 Tim. vi. 6, 7.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, . . . that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19.

"God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." Heb. vi. 10.

"To do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Heb. xiii. 16.

"For they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." Rom. vi. 16.

"Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

St. John says: "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" 1 John iii. 17.

None can carefully consider these plain texts of Scripture and not see that it is the duty of the followers of Christ to consecrate themselves, with all they have and are, to the cause of God? They are not allowed to "lay up treasures on earth." This command is as positive as, "Thou shalt not steal;" and yet how little is it regarded! Mr. Wesley, on this text, says: "If you aim at laying up treasures on earth, you are not barely losing your time, and spending your strength for that which is not bread; for what is the fruit, if you succeed? You

have murdered your own soul. You have thrown away treasure in heaven. God and Christ are lost! You have gained riches and hell fire!"

Look also at that other text: "They that will be rich," etc. On this passage the same author remarks: "Those who calmly desire, and deliberately seek, to attain them (riches), whether they do in fact gain the world or no, do infallibly lose their own souls. These are they that sell him who bought them with his blood for a few pieces of gold or silver."

Are there not thousands in all the Churches around us who are not only "rich" — worth fourfold more than is requisite for "providing for their own households" — but are using their utmost efforts to gather riches in yet greater abundance, while the cause of God, of humanity, of religion, is left to languish? While many of them are rolling in wealth, luxuriating in fashionable pomp and splendor, the Lord's poor are suffering for bread, and the heathen perishing for lack of knowledge.

Again, look at the declaration of St. Paul to the Corinthians: "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." How many among us act as though they did not believe this scripture! They pursue the things of this world, lay up treasures on earth, and seek to enlarge their estate, with as much zeal and perseverance as those who are professedly of the world.

Our Lord's parable of the Talents clearly teaches that we are under obligations to render to God all the service in our power. Here we are taught that all we are and all we have belong to God. He hath intrusted us with *his* goods. We are required to use them, not for our own aggrandizement, but for the interests of his kingdom. If we fail to use them for his glory, we are culpable in his sight, and will be punished accordingly. The Christian is represented as "dead" to the world, and is exhorted to "set his affection on things above," and to "seek those things which are above." But how can he obey these precepts, while the love of the world, the thirst for riches, and the pursuit of gain, are the great absorbing concerns of his life?

He should be diligent in business; but the great object and aim of all his pursuits should be, not the amassing of wealth, or the laying up of a fortune for his children, but the promotion of the glory of God by doing good, and advancing the interests of his kingdom. After providing things needful for ourselves and household, whatever else of this world we accumulate or possess belongs to God and his cause. It is not *our own*, and we "rob God" if we appropriate it for the personal

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emolument of ourselves or our children after us. If this be not the gospel-requirement, then we cannot comprehend the teachings of Christ and his aposties.

II. Objections to this doctrine of entire consecration will no doubt be urged. It strikes at the root of the crying sin of the age—the vice of avarice. It will be opposed by the worldly-minded, the avaricious, the proud, the vain, the ambitious, the selfish, the ungodly; but it will meet the approval of the heavenly-minded, the benevolent, the humble, the meek, the cross-bearing, the compassionate, the pure in heart. If adopted by the Churches generally, it would produce a revolution in Christian practice such as has not been witnessed perhaps since the apostolic age. Men of the world, and living after the world, have flooded the Churches; but few comparatively are holy, and entirely consecrated to God.

Were the principle of entire consecration to God of time, talents, services, and substance, generally urged by the Churches, the lines would soon be more distinctly drawn between "the precious and the vile," between such as follow Christ for "the loaves and fishes" and such as follow him because they are his friends, ready to do his bidding. No genuine Christian would falter in the ranks. The half-hearted, the real worldlings, the selfish, and the covetous, would soon cry out: "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" Loving this present world, they would forsake the Saviour; but the genuine Christian, the kind, the benevolent, the good, would rally with renewed energy around the blessed cross—they would rise a mighty host in the name of Christ, and go forth with resistless power, and push the battle to the gate of the enemy. Before the influence of Christians thus devoted to God, living for God, laboring and suffering for God, walking "by faith and not by sight," inflamed by holy zeal, warmed by heavenly love, trampling beneath their feet the pomp of the world, and esteeming "all things but loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus;" before the influence of such a Christian band the heart of stone would melt, the scoffer would be silenced, the sinner would tremble, infidelity would be struck dumb, and hell, in its gloomy center, would feel the shock. Such a religion the world once saw, when the holy apostles were the preachers, and thousands were bowing at the foot of the cross. Such a religion the world shall see again, when "Zion shall arise and shake herself from the dust," when "the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom," when the Rider upon the "white horse shall go forth conquering and to conquer." In a word, such must be the zeal and devotion of the Church before the world shall be converted.

The great heathen world is now open for the gospel. All that is needed is the men and the means, and, with the promised blessing of God, the conversion of the world to Christianity shall soon be read on earth on the page of history, and heralded through heaven by the apocalyptic angel's trump.

When men and means are wanted for the purpose of war, the work of blood and slaughter, how soon are the magazines of earth opened to pour out their treasures and the plains covered with the marshaling hosts! Let but a similar zeal inspire the Church, and the friends of Christ be willing to rally round the cross of Calvary, and pour into the treasury of the Lord the wealth now corrupting in the coffers of the rich, who "profess and call themselves Christians," and we shall soon send armies and armaments to China and Japan, to Hindoostan and Oceanica; and "Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands to God," while "the isles shall wait for his law."

1. But it may be objected that *the carrying out of this entire consecration to God is impracticable.*

If so, then Christianity is a failure, and the most glowing prophecies of the Bible a delusion! *Why* impracticable? Did it not exist at the glorious birthday of the gospel Church? Has it not since been realized by various individuals in different ages? Were not such men as Luther, Baxter, Latimer, Wesley, Whitefield, Fletcher, Brainerd, Carvosso, Summerfield, and various others, who gave themselves, their time, talents, labors, and substance, to God, entirely consecrated to his holy cause? Let but the great body of professed Christians come up firmly and unitedly to the same standard, and the work is accomplished. If this entire consecration be *right*, it cannot be *impracticable.* What *ought* to be done, *may* be done. It *is* practicable. It *can* be realized. It *must* be realized, or the world will never be converted. But God has said: "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Let the principle of entire consecration to God be incorporated as an essential disciplinary requirement of the Church. Let it be explained, and urged upon all, as one of the great laws of the kingdom of Christ. Let it be plainly set forth, so that all in the Church, or proposing to enter it, may know at once that it is expected that all the faithful shall obey this precept with as much strictness as any other. Were this the case, what a marked difference there would be between the Church and the world!

2. But *this would provoke persecution.* Suppose it did. So would the keeping of many other commandments. "They that will live godly in

Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." If this principle be *right*, if it be a gospel axiom, which we are convinced none can deny without arraying themselves directly against the Scripture, it necessarily follows that no Christian, properly understanding the subject, can refuse obedience to this obligation without "denying the faith, and being worse than an infidel." It is better not to profess the name of Christ than, after having done so, obstinately to refuse to do what he commands.

III. ENCOURAGEMENT.—But there is a bright side to this subject. When this principle shall be carried out in any one Church, that Church will be a Goshen in the land of darkness. Its example will shine forth as a standing reproof to all others. It will be like one of the "two witnesses, prophesying in sackcloth." Its influence would soon be felt. The example would be exhibited of a band of Christians living together in pure Christian love and fellowship. Its widows would all be provided for, its poor all supported, its children all educated, all its interests amply sustained, and its missionaries sent abroad to bear to other portions of the world the glad tidings of salvation.

Were the Churches generally to carry out this principle of entire consecration, the influence would be like a sweeping revolution, not scattering death and destruction in its track, but sanctifying the Church, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, supplying the wants of the needy, visiting the sick, converting the world.

The wealth, learning, talent, influence, and power, now in possession of the professed followers of Christ, if properly wielded, would form a mighty river, defying in its majestic sweep all opposition, and bearing upon its bosom the blessings of peace, prosperity, happiness, and eternal life, to all the nations of the earth.

Religion is intended to unite man to his fellow-man, and all to God. This it is destined to accomplish. When once the glorious principles of the gospel, in all their purity and perfection, shall possess the hearts, and mold the lives, of all the people of the earth, "violence shall no more be heard in our land, nor wasting, nor destruction, within our borders." Then shall the voice from heaven proclaim to a converted world: "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XIV.

QUESTION 1. On what do the *authority* for the principle of Christian consecration to God and the *sense* in which it is to be understood rest?

2. What proof is founded on the example of the first Christians?

3 In what sense is the "community of goods" established by the Church at Jerusalem a model for the imitation of other Churches?

4. What are some of the principal of the other scriptures quoted on the subject?

5. What objections to the carrying out of the principles of Christian consecration are mentioned?

6. How may these objections be answered?

7. How does it appear that there is a bright side to this subject?

PART IV.—THE INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK I.—THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

ITS ORGANIZATION, GOVERNMENT, AND POLITY—INTRODUCTORY.

ALTHOUGH there has been much controversy, in different ages, on the subject of Church-government and polity, yet we are persuaded that, since the Lutheran Reformation, this department of theological science has not received a degree of attention commensurate with its importance. With many of the Protestant denominations, the leading *doctrines* of Christianity have been viewed of paramount importance, while Church-polity has been considered a matter of minor consequence. Voluminous controversial writings have been put forth on the mooted questions between Calvinists and Arminians, and between Socinians, Pelagians, Unitarians, or Universalists, on the one hand, and Trinitarians on the other hand; yet a comparatively small space has been allowed to the great questions pertaining to the organization and polity of the Church. It is true the leading points dividing Episcopalians and Presbyterians on this subject, and some other questions that might be named, have been extensively discussed; but these controversies have too generally been conducted in a deeply partisan spirit—each writer assuming that the organization with which he is connected is right in all things, and endeavoring *so* to construe the Scriptures as to sustain his pre-adopted theory.

It is also remarkable that, in much of the discussion upon this subject, too little appeal has been made to the teachings of Scripture. Many of the disputants have relied mainly, if not exclusively, in the defense of their views, on arguments founded alone on reason and expediency.

In the views maintained in this treatise, the principle by which we have been governed is, that the Bible, in regard to those great points in reference to which it furnishes clear information or explicit warrant, whether by express precept or apostolic example, is our infallible standard and authoritative guide; but that, in all matters of detail not set forth in Scripture, we should be guided by the principles of reason and expediency; provided only, that no regulation be adopted inconsistent with Scripture.

In the ensuing chapters, the following leading positions will be found, with more or less fullness, set forth and defended:

1. That the Christian Church is, in an important sense, a divine institution.

2. That the Scriptures do set forth, so far as some leading foundation principles are concerned, a form of Church-government; and that, thus far, all Churches should be conformed to the Scripture model.

3. That in much of the *detail* pertaining to Church-polity the Scriptures give no specific instructions; and that, in relation to all such matters, Churches are left to be guided by the principles of reason and expediency.

4. That our Saviour vested in his inspired apostles authority to organize and "set in order" his Church, and to exercise under him, so long as they lived, supreme jurisdiction and control over it.

5. That the apostolic office, so far as it implied divine inspiration and miraculous powers, ceased with the original apostles; but, so far as it implied a divine commission to preach the gospel to all the world, and to administer the sacraments and discipline of the Church, it is to be perpetuated "alway, even unto the end of the world."

6. That the inspired apostles deposited that portion of their prerogative which was to be perpetuated in the ordained eldership (bishops, or presbyters), who are their proper scriptural successors.

7. That these bishops, presbyters, or pastors (or by whatever name they may be distinguished), to whom is committed the oversight and government of the Church, should, as expediency may require, exercise that oversight and government in part through the medium of councils, presbyteries, synods, conferences, or conventions. They should also, so far as expediency may dictate, arrange for the assistance and coöperation of the laity, yet so as still to retain within their own hands the power of government with which the Head of the Church has invested them.

8. Each organized Church should be placed under the pastoral charge of an ordained bishop, elder, or minister.

9. Ministers not in charge of organized Churches should be employed as evangelists, or missionaries, in getting up and organizing new Churches.

10. The elders, to whom pertain the government of the Churches, should arrange for the episcopal or the presbyterial plan—for the itinerant or the more settled pastoral relation — according as they may judge the one or the other to be expedient, in view of securing the great object of the ministry—the supply of the Churches with pastors, and the establishment of the gospel in new places.

11. There are two orders of ministers: First, elders (otherwise termed bishops, or pastors), in whom is vested the prerogative of government and ordination; secondly, deacons, an order of ministers inferior to elders, not vested with the prerogative of government or ordination, but who are assistants of the elders, and who, after using "the office of a deacon well," may be entitled by promotion to the full prerogatives of the ministry.

12. The rulers of the Church, in administering its government, are bound to observe the laws laid down in Scripture; nor have they a right to adopt any regulation inconsistent therewith.

CHAPTER I.

FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES EXAMINED.

ALL societies, institutions, and organizations, must be either *human* or *divine* in their origin. When *human*, those who establish them, or unite in their organization, possess the prerogative of arranging their constitution according to their pleasure.

In a political point of view, although some forms of government may combine more advantages than others, and be far preferable to them, yet no nation or people can be required to adopt any particular form of government when they deem another form better, but all are properly left in this matter to judge for themselves. They may make an unwise choice—they may choose an aristocracy, when a monarchy would be more suitable to their condition; or a monarchy, when a republic or a mixed government would be much more beneficial—but in this they are not to be arbitrarily controlled by a foreign influence. If they choose to make a bad selection, they will, of course, suffer the evil consequences, but they may not rightfully be molested in the exercise of their own choice. This right of choice cannot be trampled upon, except by the foot of tyranny.

All communities, or conventions of persons, possessing the right to establish a constitution for their own government, have not only the right to choose their own form of government, but they may incorporate in it any principles, ceremonies, or penalties, they please, so that they do not infringe upon the rights and prerogatives of others; and in the exercise of this right they are accountable to God alone.

The same principle applies to all voluntary benevolent associations. These being merely *human* institutions, those who unite in their organization are their own judges, both as to the expediency of originating them, and as to the peculiar character of their constitution. This principle is of universal application to *human* institutions.

By a *divine* institution, we understand one which has been founded by the Almighty himself. Here we readily perceive that, in the very nature of things, there is something radically different from all insti-

tions *merely human.* A *divine* institution, whether political or ecclesiastical, or whatever be its character, originates in the will and appointment of God. It is the appointment of God that causes it *to be,* and to be *what it is.* God, being the creator and supreme governor of the universe, possesses the right to prescribe for all or any portion of his creatures whatever form or constitution of government he may please, whether political or ecclesiastical; and whatever God has appointed, or prescribed, is of universal and absolute obligation, to the last jot and tittle, according to the true intent and meaning of the divine appointment. It follows, moreover, that whatever God has appointed or established must remain in force, unchanged and unmodified, until the same authority which gave it being and force shall disannul or modify it. No power of man may alter or modify an ordinance of God.

Again, as God possesses the right to establish among his creatures whatever institutions he may please, so also it is his prerogative to select the method or plan according to which such institutions shall be set up. He may choose to exercise his agency through the medium of angels or of men, or whatever being or agency else he may select, as a suitable instrumentality for the accomplishment of his own purposes; but those agents, whether angelic or human, can only proceed so far as they are clothed with the authority of God, and act in accordance with the divine commission with which they are invested. Should they transcend or deviate from their commission, all their acts in thus transcending or deviating, so far as the establishment of a divine institution is concerned, are null and void; but this would not vitiate, or tend in the least to weaken, the force of such acts as may be performed in accordance with their commission.

Having now premised some of the radical and general principles pertaining to human and divine institutions, we proceed to consider their connection with and bearing upon the Christian Church.

The *Christian Church* must be either a *divine* or *human* institution. A divine institution, according to the principles laid down, derives its authority from the appointment of *God*—a human institution from the appointment of *man.* It should not, however, be overlooked, that an institution may be *divine* in some respects, and *human* in other respects; but the distinction is obvious. So far as it originates in the appointment of God, or has been prescribed by his authority, it is *divine;* but so far as any thing pertaining to it has been left to the judgment and discretion of uninspired man, it is *human.*

It may be said, with propriety, that the *State* and *family* are, to a certain extent, divine institutions; for the one originates in the ex-

press appointment of God, and the other is *of God;* for it is written: "There is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God." Rom. xiii. 1. Therefore it is true, whether we speak of the institution of the Church, the State, or the family, the same principle applies in precisely the same way. Just so far only as they originate in the appointment or by the authority of God, to the same extent are they divine institutions.

That the Christian Church is a *divine* institution, in a high and important sense of the word, is admitted by all Christians. Every thing essential to its constitution is founded upon the appointment of God. We are not, however, to infer from this, that every thing should be excerpted from the Church which God has not expressly appointed. To say that God has prescribed *nothing* in reference to the institution and organization of the Church, is to deny that it is a divine institution at all; but to contend that nothing may be connected with its organization except what God has expressly appointed, is a position unwarranted by the word of God—nor is it maintained by any denomination of Christians.

From the above, it will follow that, in the establishment and organization of the Christian Church, some things are expressly laid down or prescribed in Scripture, but that all things which may properly be connected with that organization are not thus expressly prescribed. It also follows that, so far as the constitution and organization of the Church have been expressly laid down or prescribed in Scripture, it is the duty of Christians to conform thereto; but in reference to the less important matters, not prescribed in the Scriptures, they may be guided by the dictation of circumstances, or their judgment of expediency.

In opening the Bible to learn the true character of that organization called the *Christian Church*, our first inquiry will be: Through what *agency*, or by what *means*, has God established and organized this Church? Here we may observe that, since the Fall of man, God has only been approachable by the human family through a mediator; but the great Mediator was not fully revealed to man under the Mosaic dispensation. Although all the merciful manifestations of God to man since the Fall were virtually and really through the mediation of the Messiah, yet, until this Messiah was manifest in the flesh, there was instituted a *sub-mediation*. God, ever since the Fall, could only look mercifully upon man through the Messiah, but until the actual coming of the Messiah man could only look up to that Messiah, and thus have access to the mercy of God through signs and symbols, types and shadows, which properly constituted a sub-mediatorship, through which

man could apprehend that only true and real Mediator between God and man.

All the typical array of the Mosaic law was adumbrative of the gospel. Moses, with his priests and altars, his victims and his offerings, foreshadowed Christ and his gospel, his atonement and his Church; but the Mosaic institution, notwithstanding its typical and shadowy character, was nevertheless an appointment of God—it was divine in its origin, and, for the time and purposes for which it was intended was as much an institution of God, and of as binding obligation, as the gospel itself now is. But we ask, How did God give his sanction to that institution, and stamp it with the seal of his authority? We answer, It was through the ministry of Moses. To him he gave his law, inscribing its great moral heart upon the tables of stone with his own finger, and presenting in minute detail all the precepts and commandments, the ceremonies and rites. Thus, having qualified and instructed him in all matters, great and small, pertaining to the politico-ecclesiastical organization about to be set up, in all the minutia in reference to the government and worship of the people, the tabernacle to be reared, and the offerings to be presented, he sends him down from the mount of revelation, yet quaking with the touch of Divinity, commissioned with the solemn charge: "See that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."

Thus we perceive that, in the establishment of the divine institution of the Mosaic law, the chosen mediator of the Sinaic covenant was not only endued with miracle-working powers for the attestation of the divinity of his mission, but was charged with minute and specific instructions in reference to all the parts and appurtenances of the extensive and complicated fabric for the erection of which he was the divinely-constituted agent. The point specially to be borne in mind in the Mosaic institution is, that Moses was not commanded to erect among the Israelites a civil and religious polity of some indefinite character, but that minute and specific instructions were given, pointing out in detail the principles to be incorporated, the ordinances and services to be observed, and the various classes and kinds of sacred persons and things, together with the special offices they were to perform, and the uses to which they were to be appropriated—from all which it is clear that the institution of the law was only divine so far as it was conformed to the true intent of the divine prescription. Had Moses proceeded to the erection of a tabernacle of service, and a political and Church-organization, framed according to his own conceptions of propriety, utility, or expediency, independent of his instructions, in the

same proportion as he deviated from the "pattern shewed him in the mount," would the institution cease to be divine, and rest all its claims to reverence and obedience on the basis of mere human authority?

The remarks already made may pave the way for the better understanding of the new institution commonly called the *Christian Church.*

Upon this point, the first position we take is, that Christ Jesus, the Son of God, was the great agent and mediator, properly and plenarily invested with the highest authority which God could impart, for the establishment of the gospel dispensation and the erection and organization of the Christian Church. In reference to this authoritative investment of the Messiah, we hear him exclaiming, by the mouth of the prophet, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek," etc. And the delivery of the grand evangelical commission to the apostles is prefaced with these remarkable words: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Again he saith: "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Hence we see that Jesus was properly invested with all the authority necessary for the establishment of a divine institution.

As Jesus Christ is thus invested with the supreme authority of Heaven, it necessarily follows that, in the erection and organization of the gospel Church, he may perform the whole work by his own immediate personal agency, or he may delegate to others, whom he may select and qualify, the whole or any part of that work. From the plenary powers with which he was invested, it follows, in the event of his conferring upon others the whole or any portion of his commission, that those thus commissioned, and acting according to that commission under him, are invested with all the authority to act in the premises which Christ himself possessed. And as Christ was endued with all the authority of the Godhead, and as those commissioned by him were invested with all *his* authority, so also they were clothed with all the authority of God himself; and any institution they might establish and organize, in the legitimate exercise of that high trust, would be as really divine in its character, and as strictly binding and authoritative, as if the work had all been performed by the direct personal agency of God.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER I.

QUESTION 1. What is the distinction between a *human* and a *divine* institution?

2. Have a people the right to choose their own form of government?

3. In a divine institution, to what extent may the people shape their government as they choose?

4. How may an institution be *divine* in some respects, and *human* in other respects?

5. In what sense are the *State* and the *family* divine institutions?

6. In what sense is the *Church* a divine institution?

7. How has God been approachable by man since the Fall?

8. Was the *Mosaic law* a divine institution, and in what manner was it set up?

9. Who was the Agent, and with what authority was he vested, in setting up the *Christian* Church?

CHAPTER II.

THE APOSTOLIC OFFICE.

I. WE CONSIDER ITS NATURE.

We see from the Scriptures that Christ, in the establishment and organization of his Church, called to his assistance the services of others, whom he called *apostles;* and we proceed to inquire into the nature of the *apostolic office.*

When was the apostolic office instituted? Some have supposed that when our Saviour appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, and delivered to them the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," then, and in that act, *originated* the apostolic office, in the exercise of which the apostles proceeded in the establishment of the Christian Church. But this view of the subject we conceive to be erroneous. To suppose that the calling and commission of the apostles, which took place near the commencement of Christ's public ministry, was only temporary, and ceased when Christ expired on the cross, and that the apostolic office commenced *de novo*, subsequently to the Saviour's resurrection, though a very generally received sentiment, yet, we think, a little examination will clearly evince that it must have been adopted in haste.

In the first chapter of The Acts, we are presented with an account of the appointment of one to fill the place vacated by the apostasy and death of Judas. Peter on that occasion, speaking of Judas, said, "He was numbered with us, and had obtained part of *this ministry;*" plainly implying that the ministry pertaining to the apostles, subsequent to the crucifixion of Christ, was not a newly constituted one, but a continuation of the same ministry into which they, together with Judas, had originally been inducted. In confirmation of the same doctrine, Peter proceeds to quote from the Psalms the following words: "Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein, and *his bishopric let another take.*" After this we find the apostles praying in the following words: "Thou Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may *take*

part of this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell."

Now, to suppose that the apostolic ministry, in its history subsequent to the resurrection, was not a continuation of the same that had existed previous to the crucifixion, but that it is founded upon and originated with the grand commission given after our Saviour's resurrection, seems obviously contrary to the plain import of the passages just adduced. We arrive, therefore, at the conclusion, that the apostolic office, in the exercise of which the apostles acted, when organizing the Christian Church, dates its origin anterior to the Saviour's crucifixion. In the tenth chapter of St. Matthew we find Jesus calling his twelve apostles, and "sending them forth," saying to them: "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils." And in the same discourse the Saviour adds: "He that receiveth you receiveth *me*, and he that receiveth me receiveth *him that sent me*."

Here we find the foundation of the apostolic commission, and in reference to it we may notice that two things are clearly apparent: 1. It implied a commission to "preach," and to confirm the same by the performance of miracles. 2. It implied a commission to act in the name and under the instructions of Jesus, with the same divine authority which *he* had received from the Father. This is evident from the remarkable declaration, "He that receiveth you receiveth *me*, and he that receiveth me *receiveth him that sent me*." As much as if the Saviour had said, "I delegate to you the same authority which my Father hath delegated to me."

We find the establishment of the apostolic office recorded by St. Mark, in the third chapter of his Gospel, in the following words: "And he *ordained* twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils." Here we perceive substantially the same account which is given by St. Matthew, with the more explicit announcement of the *ordination* of the apostles.

On the subject now before us we may farther remark that, although we must date the original institution of the apostolic office from the first appointment and ordination of the apostles, and their commission to preach and work miracles, yet it must be confessed that while the commission they received was plenary, clothing them with divine authority to enter upon the great work for which they had been consecrated, it was circumscribed as to the field of its operation. Jesus said unto them. "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of

the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." From this we infer that although the apostles were now fully invested with the authority and prerogatives of the apostolic office, yet this does not imply that the field of their labors might not subsequently be enlarged, and they be more fully and explicitly instructed as to the nature of their duties.

In the establishment of his kingdom our Saviour advanced step by step, unfolding to his apostles the great mysteries of his gospel and the ground-plot of the new institution, as they were able to understand and prepared to receive them. Hence it appears that even up to the hour of our Saviour's crucifixion his apostles were greatly ignorant with regard to the laws and institutions of that kingdom, for the establishment of which they had been chosen and ordained as prime ministers.

Subsequent to our Saviour's resurrection farther light was shed upon this subject. We read (Matt. xxviii. 18–20): "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." It is recorded (Mark xvi. 15): "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," etc. In John xx. 21–23, we read: "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

From the scriptures above quoted, it appears that after our Saviour's resurrection from the dead he enlarged the boundaries, and more fully explained the character of the apostolic mission. Hitherto the apostles had been restricted in their labors to the Jews, but now the "middle wall of partition," which had separated the Gentile from the Jew, is demolished, and "all the world" is the divinely-assigned field of apostolic evangelism and jurisdiction. The plenary powers of the apostles are here distinctly and emphatically stated. The words of the Saviour are: "As my Father hath sent me, *even so send I you.*" The Father had sent the Son, clothed with "all power in heaven and in earth," "even so" doth the Son "send" the apostles. So that as the Son was invested with all the authority of the Father, in like manner were the apostles invested with all the authority of the Son; hence it is clear

that all the acts and doings of the apostles, under the commission in question, are of divine authority.

It is not, however, to be inferred from this that the apostles were invested with the authority of Christ to perform any part of the peculiar mission *he* received of the Father; but that *they* were as *truly sent* as *truly authorized* to perform the work assigned them, in establishing and organizing the gospel-Church, as the Son had been sent and authorized by the Father to perform the work for which *he* came into the world.

II. Another important and obvious inference from the apostolic commission, as here enlarged and explained, is its *perpetuity*. This the general tenor of the gospel would strongly indicate. It is plain that the Christian religion is designed for universal dissemination. It is intended for all people in all ages; hence it would appear that it should be sent to all as an authoritative message from God. But the express language of the commission, in its enlarged and more explicit form, as already quoted, sets the point in hand in a light not easy to be misunderstood: "Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the gospel to *every creature*." And again: "Go ye therefore, and teach *all nations*." Now, we ask, if the apostolic office terminated with the lives of the then existing apostles, how was it possible for them to fill the mission with which they were intrusted? Could the twelve, in their own persons, "go into *all the world*"? Could *they* "preach the gospel to *every creature*"? Could *they* "teach *all nations*," of every age, and of every clime? It is most evident that they could not. But again, the Saviour adds: "Lo, I am with you *alway, even unto the end of the world*." Now, we demand, can this apply exclusively to the ordained twelve? Are *they* to be continued as the personal agents in carrying out this commission "to the end of the world"? No one *can* so understand the passage. And we may confidently ask, How, therefore, can the passage be consistently interpreted, unless we infer that the apostolic office is to be perpetuated, and this commission to be carried out by the apostles' successors?

Notwithstanding the plain, and to our mind unavoidable, inference from the words of Christ, that the apostolic office is perpetual, yet many are slow to admit the truth of the inference. We are met by the objection, that the apostles were endued with plenary inspiration to write the New Testament Scriptures, and with miracle-working power. And it is argued that as it is not contended that the supposed successors of the apostles have been endued with these powers, therefore the apostles can have no successors. We will calmly consider this objection, as it is the main, if not the sole, reliance of those who restrict the apostolic

office to the New Testament twelve. Our first remark is, that the objection in question is based upon and derives all its force from what we conceive to be a false assumption. It assumes that the apostolic office, in order to be *perpetual*, must be *unchangeable*—that is, that a material change in the power and prerogatives of an office cannot take place without the *destruction* of that office. But why, we ask, must such a result ensue? Does *perpetuity* in itself necessarily imply *unchangeableness?* Surely it does not. The existence of man is to be perpetuated forever, but who can tell "through what new scenes and changes we must pass"? Even so, may not the apostolic office still be perpetuated, in all that is essential to its existence, while it may undergo changes in its features?

But we are not left to mere reasoning on this subject. We have the plain Bible-statement of facts. As we have already seen, the mission of the apostles, after the resurrection of Christ, was greatly changed from what it had been before. It was enlarged in its sphere, modified in its character, and more explicitly unfolded in its functions, yet all that was essential to its identity was preserved. It was still the same *ministry* and *apostleship*. If, then, so great a change as was realized in the functions and prerogatives of the apostles, in passing from the period of their original call and ordination up to the full exercise of their high prerogatives, in the establishment and organization of the gospel-Church, subsequent to the resurrection of Christ, did not destroy the identity of the office, why should it be argued that the same office cannot be perpetuated, unless precisely the same prerogatives and powers be continued with it?

We do not contend that *that* part, or, more properly, that *appendage* of the apostolate, which implied plenary inspiration and miraculous endowments, was to be transmitted to their successors. This is not the matter in dispute. The only question here before us, is whether those extraordinary powers were a necessary part of the office essential to its very existence? We see no evidence that they were. Miraculous powers were no doubt possessed by numbers having no claims to be apostles. And moreover, it is clear that, so far as plenary inspiration is concerned, this was not possessed by the apostles till they were "endued with power from on high" on the day of Pentecost. It was not till then that the Spirit "led them into all truth," bringing to their minds the past instructions of Christ, and enabling them to pen those divine truths which constitute the New Testament code. And yet it is equally clear that they did not *just begin* to be apostles when they received these extraordinary endowments. They had been consecrated

to the same "ministry and apostleship," even while Judas was one of their number. Previous to the crucifixion of Christ, it was not thought necessary by our Lord to confer upon the apostles powers so extensive. And the reason is obvious. Such powers were not then requisite. Upon the same principle, we may infer that, when those extraordinary powers ceased to be needed, they would of course be withheld. But as the conferring of them did not create the apostolate, neither can the withholding of them destroy it.

It will be readily perceived how utterly inconsistent with the foregoing scriptural view of the *perpetuity* of the apostolic office must be that theory upon which have been founded the arrogant assumptions of a haughty episcopacy as well as all the enormous and blasphemous pretensions of the papacy. According to the Scriptures, the apostolic office is *perpetuated;* but in what? Not in the assumed Primacy, in the pretended chair of St. Peter, claiming to sway a scepter of absolute control, as "the Lord God the Pope," over the whole Church—not in the arrogant claims and usurped prerogatives of an unwarranted episcopacy—but in the living ministry, "called of God," and "sent forth" by the Head of the Church "into all the world" to "preach the gospel to every creature." In the Scripture sense, *they* are the successors of the apostles, who, like St. Peter, hear the voice of their Master by his Spirit addressing them, saying, "Feed my lambs, . . . Feed my sheep;" or who can say with St. Paul, "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel." The divinely called and commissioned ministers of Christ, in every age, are the *apostles* of the Lord, not claiming the miraculous powers and extraordinary prerogatives of the sacred "twelve," but succeeding them as "embassadors for Christ," proclaiming his gospel, administering his ordinances and discipline and feeding the "Church of God."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER II.

QUESTION 1. Whom did Christ call to his assistance in establishing his Church?

2. What erroneous view has been extensively held as to the origin of the apostolic office?

3. How can it be shown that the apostolic office originated in the first *calling* and *ordination* of the twelve?

4. What scriptures are quoted to prove that Judas was an apostle?

5. What two elements did the apostolic office originally embrace?

6. Wherein does the record of Mark, on the subject, vary from that of Matthew?

7. Was the original commission of the apostles plenary?

8. Wherein was it afterward changed?

9. What farther light was shed upon the subject after Christ's resurrection?

10. In what sense were the apostles *sent as* the Father had sent the Son?

11. Was the apostolic office to be *perpetual?*

12. How is this proved?

13. What objection is urged against this doctrine?

14. How is the objection answered?

15. Is the view given of the *perpetuity* of the apostolic office consistent with the assumptions of High Church Episcopalians and Roman Catholics?

CHAPTER III.

FORM OF CHURCH-GOVERNMENT.

I. Before we proceed to inquire particularly concerning the constitution of the Church, as established under the apostolic administration, we will consider *the light in which the acts and doings of the apostles in the premises should be viewed by the Church in all succeeding ages, and the extent to which they should be considered of binding authority.*

From the supreme authority with which the apostles were invested, and the divine inspiration with which they were endued, it does not necessarily follow that they acted under the sanction of this authority, and under the guidance of this inspiration, in all the minute history of their lives. In Galatians ii. 11–13, St. Paul speaks as follows: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him." Here we find Peter, one of the inspired and divinely-commissioned apostles, acting with dissimulation, and receiving the righteous reprimand of St. Paul. No one can suppose that Peter, in this case, was acting under the authority of that divine commission he had received of the Lord Jesus, or that he had a right to claim, while acting in contravention of the spirit of the mission, the fulfillment of the promise—"Lo, I am with you alway."

In 1 Cor. vii. 6, St. Paul says: "But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment." On this verse Dr. Clarke remarks: "We may understand the apostle here as saying that the directions already given were from his *own judgment*, and not from any divine inspiration; and we may take it for granted that when he does not make this observation he is writing under the immediate afflatus of the Holy Spirit." Seeing, then, from these scriptures, that the apostles themselves were liable, in some cases, to err, and did not profess to speak at all times under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it is matter of special importance to us to be able certainly to distinguish their *errors* from their *authoritative acts*, and their *personal advice* from their *divinely-inspired*

instructions. To admit that there are no means by which we may gain a knowledge of this distinction, would be to shroud the New Testament in obscurity, and greatly weaken its authority; but we are not left, in this matter, to be tossed upon the waves of uncertainty.

We inquire therefore, How may we arrive at the knowledge in question? As the apostles were specially commissioned to establish and organize the Christian Church, and endued with miraculous powers and plenary inspiration, for the accomplishment of this great work, we view it as a matter of clear and necessary inference that in all their official acts and instructions they were so guided by the Spirit of unerring truth that all they did and said, belonging or in anywise appertaining to the great work for which they had been set apart, was of divine authority and perpetual obligation. And as the Scriptures of the New Testament are presented under the divine sanction as the infallible record of the gospel system, containing the history of its Divine Author, of his death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification, together with the setting up, under apostolic administration, of the Church, and all doctrines and regulations necessary for its permanence and prosperity, we infer that whatsoever may be recorded *erroneous* in the conduct, or of *mere human advice* in the teachings, of the apostles, are only *the exceptions* to the general rule; and as such, the New Testament itself, by the manner in which such facts are recorded or such instructions are delivered, will clearly show *that they are exceptions*. We therefore conclude that the example, the institutions, the regulations, and the instructions of the apostles, are of divine authority, and of permanent obligation, *except when the Scriptures themselves plainly indicate to the contrary*.

II. We now inquire concerning the FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND POLITY according to which the New Testament Church has been organized.

In entering upon this subject, the first question to be considered is this. Has any particular form of Church-government been laid down in the New Testament?

In modern times, a numerous portion of the followers of Christ have adopted the negative side of the question now before us. Assuming that Christ and his apostles laid down for the Church which they reared "no particular form of government," many have proceeded to erect and organize ecclesiastical fabrics, according to their own conceptions of propriety or expediency, until Christendom has become severed into an almost endless number of dissimilar institutions, resembling each other as little as the diversified systems of political rule throughout the known world. The causes which have tended to give currency

to this sentiment, and its pernicious influence upon Christianity itself, we will not now consider. It is our present business to examine its claims to truth. Is it *true* that Christ and his apostles have established no particular form of Church-government?

The position that no particular form of government has been established for the New Testament Church, upon the admission that such a Church has been established, seems to us to imply an absurdity. How can we conceive of a Church without a government? or of a government without a form? The very idea seems too ethereal for comprehension. As well might we speak of a house without a *form*, or of a world without a *form*, as of a government without a *form*. *Form* is something which necessarily inheres in all created substances, whether material or immaterial, whether simple or complex. It is essential to their very existence. Who can conceive of a political government without a form? It may be irregular in its arrangements, incongruous in its parts, or rough-hewn in its aspects, but if it be a government *it must have a form*. It may come under none of the heads, according to the definitions commonly given, of the different forms of government; but, without a form of some kind, it would not be a government at all.

Some who aver that "no particular form of Church-government is laid down in the New Testament," say they do not mean that there is "no *form* of Church-government therein laid down," but "no *particular* form," etc. If this be the position, then we demand: What is meant by "a *particular* form"? Is not one form as much "a *particular* form" as another? If not, what form is that which comes under the definition of *particular?*

Perhaps the meaning of some who use the phrase is, that "no *one* form of government is established *more than*, or *in preference to*, another." If the shift be made to this position, then we reply that one or the other of two things must be true. If "no *one* form of government be established *more than*, or *in preference to*, another," then it will follow either that *no form at all is established* or that *various forms are established*. For if one form is established, and others are not, it is clear that one is *more established* than others. But if the position be taken in real sincerity, that Christ and his apostles established various forms of government for the gospel Church, then we demand: What were those *various forms* of government? In what did their essential difference consist? If there was an essential difference between them, was not one preferable to the others? If one was preferable to the others, why was not that one universally established? Was there an essential difference in human nature, or in the nature of true Christi-

anity, in different places, that rendered these various systems of Church-government necessary? Did the same apostle establish different systems of Church-government? or did Paul establish one system, Peter another, and James another? Was one an Episcopalian, another a Presbyterian, and another a Congregationalist?

But, seeing the absurdity of all these positions, we are inclined to believe that the real meaning of those who contend that "Christ and his apostles established no particular form of Church-government," is that *they established no Church-government whatever.* Assuming, then, that this is the true meaning of the position against which we are now contending, we may dismiss from the controversy the words "*particular*" and "*form*" as mere expletives, and then the question will be narrowed down to one single point: *Did Christ and his apostles establish any Church-government?*

To comprehend this subject thoroughly, it will be necessary for us to inquire: What is the *Christian Church?* The word Church is, in the Greek, *ἐκκλησία*, which means *a congregation assembled for purposes of business*, whatever be the character of the business. A Church may properly be said to be *established* whenever a society or congregation is organized—that is, when arrangement is made for the regular meeting of the congregation and the transaction of business therein, according to established order or rule. But, in a religious sense, by a *Church* is generally understood "a congregation of faithful men, in which the true word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered, according to Christ's ordinances, in those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."

From the foregoing, it appears that, according to the generally received sentiment, a Church is a regularly-organized religious association, or society. Now, to our mind, it is difficult to conceive of such a society without a government. If the society be organized, it must be organized according to some constitution or rule; and that constitution or rule would form the basis of government. To suppose that Christ and his apostles established the Christian Church, and yet that they prescribed *no rule, no order, no fixed principle*, for the transaction of business, *no government* for the regulation of the ecclesiastical body which they created, is a position which, judging *a priori*, we must consider exceedingly improbable. In view of the nature and fitness of things, and judging from the general analogy of the works and administration of God, *prima facie* evidence is manifestly against it; and we should be slow to subscribe to the sentiment in the absence of clear and decided proof of its correctness.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER III.

QUESTION 1. To what extent were the apostles under the influence of divine inspiration?

2. What proof is given in support of this position?

3. By what rule may we decide when they *were* and when they *were not* inspired?

4. What is the first question proposed as to the *form* of Church-government?

5 How is the question answered?

6 What evil results have followed from an erroneous position on this question?

7. How is the position that the Scriptures establish "no particular form of Church-government" shown to be absurd?

8. How have the abettors of this erroneous view shifted their ground, and how is it shown that in all its phases their position is alike untenable?

9. How is the Christian Church defined?

10. Is the position that "no form of Church-government has been established" reconcilable with the *definition* given of the Church?

CHAPTER IV.

FORM OF CHURCH-GOVERNMENT—SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY—THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Did Christ and his apostles establish any particular form of Church-government? We proceed to examine the Scripture testimony in reference to this question.

1. Our first argument from Scripture is founded upon the *general analogy between the law and the gospel.*

The law and the gospel are the two great and important divine institutions constituting the leading subject-matter of revelation. The one is the prominent theme of the Old Testament and the other the engrossing topic of the New. The law was properly introductory to and typical of the gospel; and so intimate and important was the connection between them, that the law derived all its excellence, its life, vigor, and efficacy, from that gospel which it foreshadowed, and by the introduction of which it was to be superseded, while the gospel is a comment upon the mysteries of the law—the substance of which the law was the shadow, and the "bringing in of a better covenant," as an abiding substitute for that which was "ready to vanish away."

In connection with these evidences of the intimate relation subsisting between the law and the gospel, and the constant reference had by the former to the latter, when we remember the emphatic and minute sense in which the numerous parts of the complicated Mosaic system were prescribed and enjoined by the direct authority of God, it will appear unreasonable to suppose that the government of the Christian Church should be left in a state of vagueness and uncertainty. In the law of Moses, the introductory and inferior dispensation, the utmost pains are taken that all things may be explicit; but are we to suppose that in the gospel of Christ, the superior dispensation, "shadows, clouds, and darkness," are to rest upon the institution? In an institution of types and symbols, we find clear and specific arrangements; but in an institution of substance and reality, are we to look for obscurity and uncertainty? In a *transient* system, we find the organization and gov-

ernment, in their numerous features and minute details, specifically prescribed and rigidly enjoined; but, in a *permanent* system, are we to be told that no definite organization or form of government is laid down?

In the Mosaic economy, specific instructions are given for the adjustment of all the parts of the system—the furniture of the temple, its altars and its offerings, its priests and its services, the worshipers and their duties, the fasts and the feasts, the ordinances and the commandments, all, *all* these are deemed sufficiently important to receive the divine regard—but are the organization and government of the Christian Church to be passed over as mere circumstances, as matters of indifference, or of so trivial importance that all men are to be left to the entire guidance of their own peculiar notions of fitness, propriety, or expediency? To our mind, the analogical argument based upon the peculiar character of the Mosaic institution, and its connection with the gospel, furnishes strong, presumptive evidence against the hypothesis, that "no particular form of Church-government is laid down in the New Testament."

2. Our next argument upon this question is based upon *the essential identity of the Church under both the Jewish and Christian dispensations.*

Upon this point, we adopt the remarks of Mr. Watson in his Biblical and Theological Dictionary—Art. "CHURCH":

"The Christian Church is not another Church, but the very same that was before the coming of Christ, having the same faith with it, and interested in the same covenant. Great alterations, indeed, were made in the outward state and condition of the Church by the coming of the Messiah. The carnal privileges of the Jews, in their separation from other nations to give birth to the Messiah, then failed, and with that also their claim on that account to be the children of Abraham The ordinances of worship suited to that state of things then expired, and came to an end. New ordinances of worship were appointed, suitable to the new light and grace which were then bestowed upon the Church. The Gentiles came into the faith of Abraham along with the Jews, being made joint-partakers with them in his blessing. But none of these things, nor the whole collectively, did make such an alteration in the Church, but that it was still one and the same. The olive-tree was still the same, only some branches were broken off, and others grafted into it."

When we see, therefore, that the Church of God is the same Church under the gospel that it was under the law, is it reasonable to suppose that under the law there should be a specific organization and ecclesi-

astical polity, divinely prescribed, but that under the gospel there is no divine prescription on the subject? Under the law, the Church of God was a divine institution—a society or community of persons organized and placed under an ecclesiastical regimen or government by the authority of God. Now, if under the gospel there be no society or association of persons organized, and placed under a system of ecclesiastical regimen or government, by the appointment and authority of God, we demand, how can two societies, or associations, be essentially the same, when so radically variant, in all that is necessary to constitute a society?

If there be no Church-government laid down in the New Testament, as of divine authority, then it follows that the New Testament Church is under no government whatever, or under a government of human origin and authority. But, as we have seen, the Old Testament Church was under a government of divine origin and authority. Now, if it be said that the New Testament Church is under no government at all, then, we ask, how can a society or Church, under an organization and government of divine authority, be essentially the same with a society or Church destitute of any organization or government whatever? Organization and government seem to us to be essential to the very existence of a society or Church. How, then, we repeat, can a society or Church, under an organization and government of divine origin, be essentially the same with something which is destitute of what is essential to the very existence of a society or Church? But if it be said that the New Testament Church is under an organization and government of human origin and authority, then, we ask, how such a society can be essentially the same with one divinely constituted?

3. Our third argument on this subject is founded upon the fact that Christ and the gospel Church are, in Scripture, designated by terms and appellations, necessarily implying a specific and definite organization and government.

In the Old Testament, the language of prophecy speaks of the coming Messiah and of gospel times in terms which can scarcely be intelligibly interpreted, but upon the supposition that Christ has instituted a Church with a specific organization and government.

The Messiah is repeatedly spoken of by the prophets as a *King*, and his Church as a *kingdom*. "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Ps. ii. 6–8. Here the Messiah is

denominated a King. He is represented as publishing his laws—"I will declare the decree"—and as extending his dominion over the Gentiles —"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance," etc.

In Isa. ix. 6, 7, he is styled the "Prince of Peace;" and it is added: "Of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end." Isa. xxxii. 1: "Behold a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." Dan. ii. 44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," etc.

But in what sense, we ask, are we to understand these predictions? Surely no Christian will construe them, like the blinded Jew, as referring to an earthly monarch. While we do not construe the kingdom of Messiah as referring to an earthly monarchy, on the other hand we should not restrict it to the internal dominion over the heart, and thus fall into the error of the Mystic or the Quaker. Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world;" but, at the same time, he came to establish a new institution of a peculiarly excellent order. He said to Peter: "On this rock will I build my Church;" hence it is evident that the kingdom of Messiah, foretold by prophets, was not only to consist of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost—of internal principles of holiness—but it was to consist of an outward, visible Church. Assuming, then, that the kingdom of Christ referred to by the prophets embraced the visible gospel Church, we now ask, how can we reconcile the language of prophecy with the supposition that there is no Church-government and polity established by Christ and his apostles? What is a kingdom without laws, and a regular administration of those laws?

In allusion to the Jewish kingdom, Isaiah speaks of the Messiah as sitting "on the throne of David to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice." Does this language favor the idea that he was to leave his Church without a government of his own ordination? Daniel, after having described the various leading earthly monarchies, declares: "In the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven *set up a kingdom*," etc. Here we ask, How can a kingdom be "set up" by "the God of heaven," unless the organization and government be of divine origin and authority? Whoever will carefully attend to the manner in which the prophets of the Old Testament habitually spoke of the Messiah and his reign, will not be likely to conclude that the *prima facie* evidence, from that source, favors the notion that there is no government prescribed for the New Testament Church

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IV.

QUESTION 1. On what is the first Scripture argument on this subject founded?
2. How is the relation between the law and the gospel shown?
3. In what respects are the two dispensations contrasted?
4. In what particulars were the instructions as to the Mosaic economy specific?
5. Upon what is the next argument based?
6. What is the substance of the position here taken by Watson?
7. How is it shown that the position, that "no form of government is established for the New Testament Church," is irreconcilable with the *identity* of the Church under the two dispensations?
8. Upon what is the third argument on this subject founded?
9. What are some of the terms of the Old Testament designating the Church under Messiah?
10. Can these scriptures be reconciled with the position that there is no visible organized Church set up by Christ and his apostles?

CHAPTER V

FORM OF CHURCH-GOVERNMENT—SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY—THE NEW TESTAMENT.

BEFORE we proceed to examine the New Testament on this subject, it is important for us to understand the precise point of inquiry now before us; therefore we will consider, first, what is implied in "a particular form of government"—what is necessary to constitute it. We think it probable that much of the difficulty on this subject has resulted from a misapprehension at this point. Many have hastily imbibed the notion that unless a *minute detail* be exhibited of all things, great and small, which properly should be connected with a constitutional government, no form of government whatever can be established. With this preconceived and erroneous basis fixed in their minds, they have opened the New Testament, and, failing to find that minute detail of parts and particulars which they had conceived essential to a "form of government," they have assumed that none whatever has been established; and that, consequently, all are left perfectly free to the guidance of their own views of propriety or expediency.

In reference to this subject, persons have erred in two opposite extremes. Some have supposed that every thing, great and small, proper to be connected with Church organization and government, is expressly laid down in Scripture; and that, consequently, no regulation, however minute, should be sanctioned in the Church, unless we can find it expressly taught in the New Testament. Others have concluded that on the subject of Church-government no system, form, outline, or constitutional basis, has been prescribed; and that therefore no one form is of greater obligation than another. Now, the true position will be found between these two extremes.

If it be found, upon the examination of the New Testament, that the organization and government of the Christian Church have *not* been exhibited in *minute detail*, then it will follow that, in regard to that *minute detail*, all Christians are left to the guidance of their own judgment of propriety or expediency. On the other hand, if it be found

that the organization and government of the Christian Church have been exhibited, *so far as some great leading principles are concerned*, either by the official acts of the apostles, in establishing or setting the Church in order, or by their instructions authoritatively delivered, then it will follow that, in regard to those great leading principles, all Christians are under sacred obligations, as far as practicable, to conform to those divinely instituted regulations.

Contemplating the fact that the Christian Church is an institution designed to be extended throughout "all the world," and to be perpetuated to the latest period of its history, and at the same time reflecting on the almost endlessly diversified circumstances of mankind throughout this widely-extended and long-continued range, it could scarcely be inferred, judging *a priori*, that the government of the Church, in *minute detail*, should be divinely prescribed, and thus rendered authoritatively binding throughout all ages, and amongst all nations. On the other hand, in view of the important facts that the Christian religion is, and of necessity must be, essentially the same in all climes and in all ages, that human nature is also essentially the same in all places where the gospel is to be proclaimed, that the Christian Church is an institution claiming to be divine in its origin, and designed to be perpetuated to the end of the world; in view of all these facts, it would seem unreasonable, judging *a priori*, to suppose that no *great leading principles*, pertaining to the organization and government of this Church, should be divinely prescribed. And if it can be shown that although the *minute detail* is omitted, yet some *great leading principles* of Church-government are set forth in the New Testament, then these *leading principles* will constitute a "form of Church-government;" nor can they be any the less such, because the minute detail is omitted.

Some constitutions are exceedingly brief, containing only the great principles on which the government is based, while others are more extensive, going farther into detail. Would any one conclude, merely because a constitution is brief, that the principles it embraces are therefore of less authority, or that the constitution is any the less a constitution, or a government, or a "form of government," on that account? Surely not; hence we conclude that if it can be shown that Christ and his apostles prescribed certain *leading principles* pertaining to the organization and government of the Christian Church, then they did, to the same extent, establish a "*form* of Church-government." And so far as they did thus establish it, it is divinely authoritative; and all Christians, in all places and in all ages, are in duty bound to conform to "the pattern thus shown them in the mount."

The principles essential to the organization and government of the Christian Church, and the Articles of Faith essential to salvation, are few in number, and simple and comprehensive in character. From the incipiency of the papal apostasy to the present day, a disposition to multiply and extend Church-rules and Articles of Faith beyond their legitimate and authorized limits has been the bane of the Church. In numerous instances the "law of God" has been made void by "the commandments of men," or supplanted by the "traditions of the elders."

On the other hand, oppressed by the tyrannical usurpations of such as would be "lords over God's heritage," some have rushed to an opposite extreme. In some instances they have gone so far as to discard all organization, or agreed plan of government; thus giving loose rein to the wildest anarchy or the most reckless latitudinarianism. The proper scriptural medium lies between these two extremes. There *are* some great leading principles clearly laid down in the New Testament as necessary to the proper organization of the Christian Church, and some great radical doctrines essential to salvation. These, whatever they may be found to be, must be recognized, or the Church cannot be erected on the scriptural basis. For illustration, as all must admit, the New Testament teaches:

1. That all organized Churches, under the apostolic administration, had public meetings for worship at appointed times and places.

2. That Church officers were appointed to superintend the public worship and other interests of the Church.

3. That baptism and the Lord's-supper were administered to all—the former, on their first profession of the Christian faith; the latter, frequently at the regular meetings of the Church.

Various other items might be enumerated, but these are enough to show that there are *some important matters* pertaining to the organization and government of the Church clearly laid down in the New Testament.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER V.

QUESTION 1. What difficulty has resulted from not understanding what is implied in "a particular form of government"?

2. How have persons erred on this subject in two opposite extremes?

3. In what two different senses may we suppose that the government of the Christian Church might have been exhibited by Christ and his apostles?

4. Why is it improbable that the Christian Church should have been exhibited in *minute detail?*

5. Why is it unreasonable that *no great leading principles* should be given?

6. How do various *constitutions* differ from each other?

7. What will follow from the fact that no *minute detail* has been divinely prescribed?

8. What will follow from the fact that *great leading principles* have been laid down?

9. What is said of the *essential* principles relating to Church-government and of the Articles of Faith?

10. What has been a prevalent error in reference to them?

11. To what opposite extreme have others gone?

12. What three specifications are given showing that some leading principles of government are prescribed?

CHAPTER VI.

THE HIGHEST GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY — ORIGINALLY VESTED IN THE APOSTLES.

THE New Testament sets forth the principles and laws according to which the Christian Church should be organized and governed, and designates proper officers for the administration of its government, and specifies their prerogatives and qualifications.

In all governments, whether civil or ecclesiastical, the supreme or highest power is vested somewhere; and the first thing to be considered in the investigation of the genius and character of a government is, the depository and source of this power and authority.

That the highest authority must be deposited in some definite source, is just as essential in the Church as in the State. The various denominations of Christians, in the respective systems they have established, have vested the highest power in different sources. Few seem to have taken much pains to inquire at the proper oracle for information on this subject; although much has been written concerning the peculiar advantages of different systems of Church-government, resulting from that feature by which the depository of the highest authority is fixed, yet too seldom has the inquiry been made: What saith the Bible on the subject?

If, on any question connected with the Church, the teachings of the Holy Scriptures are deemed important, surely on this great radical question we should bow with the most implicit reverence and submission to what God has been pleased to ordain and establish.

Upon this question, among the various orders of professed Christians, there are five different leading views:

1. That the highest authority in the Church is vested in *each congregation of Christians collectively.* This is the theory of the Congregationalists and Independents.

2. That it is vested in *the Pope*, or some *one individual*, constituted the visible head of the Church. This is the theory of the Roman Catholics, or Papists.

3. That it is vested in *the ministers and lay officers taken together.* This is the theory of the Presbyterians.

4. That it is vested in *a superior order in the ministry,* constituted, as to the power of government and ordination, the apostles' successors. This is the theory of Protestant Episcopalians.

5. That it is vested in the ordained ministry, or eldership of the Church generally. This is the view of the Methodists, and of individuals in different denominations.

So far as we are informed, all the different views on this subject worthy of attention are embraced in the five different systems above specified. As to the notions of those who contend that "no particular form of Church-government is prescribed in Scripture," it is clear that their theory necessarily implies that the highest power in the Church is not, by divine authority, assigned any definite position, and that, consequently, all Christians are left to arrange this principle of their constitution as they may judge expedient.

In the discussion of this subject, we deem it unnecessary to enter upon the formal refutation of any of the conflicting theories specified. If it can be shown from the Scriptures in whom the highest power in the government of the Church is vested, it will follow by consequence that all conflicting theories are disproved. That the Scriptures are explicit and satisfactory on this question is our clear conviction, and we shall present the evidence on which that conviction is founded.

It cannot be doubted but that the holy apostles were invested with all the divine authority connected with the great work of their mission —the establishment and organization of the gospel Church—which the Saviour himself possessed. From this it necessarily follows that, as the Saviour had power to delegate his authority to the apostles, so had the apostles power to delegate their authority to others. It follows also, that if the apostles have failed to transmit to others the high authority for the ordering and government of the Church which they received of the Lord Jesus, that authority must have expired with them, and can exist nowhere in the Church. It *can* only exist where the apostles have placed it, and there it *must* exist. Therefore, if the high power of government in question exists in the collective body of each congregation, or any portion of them, it must be *because* the apostles themselves have thus transmitted it, and ordained its perpetuity. It will not do to argue that all societies possess the inherent right to govern themselves. Such reasoning may be valid when civil government or *human* institutions are in question; but in reference to a *divine* institution it is futile and inadmissible.

In the "beginning of Christ's religion" it is most certain that the power of government was not in the congregations or Churches collectively, but in the ministers who organized them. Ministers were before Churches were—Churches did not make or ordain the ministers, but ministers made or constituted Churches. Now, is it not undeniable that, as the highest power of government originally existed, not in the united congregation of the people, but in the ministry, it must remain in the ministry, unless it be fairly shown that the apostles have expressly ordered otherwise?

But that we may decide this matter, we will examine the record of the teachings and doings of the apostles bearing upon the subject. We commence with the establishment of the first Christian Church at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. About three thousand were added unto the Church by baptism on this occasion. In the account here given, there is not one word about the apostles delegating to this large community, or to any portion of them, the right to make their own regulations and govern themselves; on the contrary, it is obvious that this right remained in the apostles, and was exercised by them.

It is said (Acts ii. 42): "And they continued steadfastly in the *apostles'* doctrine and fellowship"—clearly implying that they were still under the jurisdiction of the apostles.

A few days after this about two thousand more were added to the Church; and still we find no evidence of the transfer of the governmental authority from the apostles, but direct proof to the contrary. So full and complete was the apostolic jurisdiction, that, when the people had sold their possessions, "they brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet." Acts iv. 34, 35. Here we find that even the temporal treasures of the Church were subjected to the control of the apostles.

But it may be contended that we find a transfer of governmental authority in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, when the "seven deacons" were appointed. The passage reads thus: "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom *we may appoint* over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

Now, it is contended that the right of electing the deacons was here transferred to the body of the Church—"the multitude of the disciples"—and that, consequently, with this elective franchise was trans

ferred the governing power in the Church. In reference to this transaction we remark, that the mere fact that the apostles chose to consult the congregation as to the particular persons to be appointed deacons, does not prove that the jurisdiction of the apostles in the premises had been relinquished. As the particular exigency giving rise to the appointment of the deacons at this time was an existing dissatisfaction in a portion of the congregation with the administration of affairs, it is quite reasonable to suppose that skillful governors might consult the choice of the congregation, even in a matter over which the entire authority and jurisdiction vested in themselves; and, as an evidence that such was the fact in the present instance, we remark the following particulars:

1. The congregation did not choose these "deacons" till they had been *directed* so to do by the apostles; hence they were not exercising an independent authority of their own, but merely acting by permission, under direction of the apostles.

2. The apostles prescribed the character of the persons to be selected.

3. There is no evidence that the apostles would have ordained persons of a different character, had such been selected.

4. The *right of appointment* was still retained by the apostles in their own hands. The apostles did not direct the congregation to *select* and *appoint* their own "deacons." The command was: "Look ye out seven men whom *we may appoint*." And, after they had been selected, they were not "deacons" until "they had set them before the apostles," and *they* had "prayed, and *laid their hands on them*." So we can find no evidence in this transaction of any settlement of the sovereign power in the whole or any portion of the congregation; nor is there any proof that St. Peter, or any one of the apostles, was placed in authority over the others. The supreme authority was evidently in the "twelve," without partition or preëminence.

In the fifteenth chapter of The Acts, we have an account of the famous Apostolic Council at Jerusalem. Here we derive satisfactory evidence against the Congregational system of Church-polity, in its common acceptation. Had the apostles delegated to each congregation the sovereign right to govern themselves, independently of any superior jurisdiction or authority, we may be sure the Church at Antioch would have exercised that right, and settled their controversy in their own body.

Again: Had each individual Church been constituted an independent body, the decrees of the council in question could not have been issued as an official, authoritative document, obligatory on the Churches of

"Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia," as they evidently were; and had each Church been constituted an independent body, then the action of the council could not have assumed the form it did. A council might have deliberated and come to a conclusion, but that conclusion would have been mere *advice*, and not *law;* but the very form in which the action of the council is recorded, demonstrates that it possessed the attribute of authority and law. St. James says: "Wherefore my *sentence* is," etc.—that is, my *decision;* or, as Chrysostom paraphrases it. "I with *authority* say this."

We learn, also, from this transaction, that St. Peter had not been constituted the supreme visible head of the Church. Had such been the fact, the appeal would have been made to him, and the sentence would have gone forth in his name and under his authority; but he seems to have had no preëminence whatever. He did not even preside in the council—St. James was the presiding officer. *He* spoke last, and formally announced the decision; but we cannot infer from this that he possessed any right to decide this question more than belonged to each of the other apostles. His apparent superiority resulted, no doubt, from the circumstance of his acting as President of the council; and that fact is readily accounted for on the probable supposition that, by an understanding among the apostles, the special jurisdiction over the Church at Jerusalem had been assigned to him.

The appeal was made to "the apostles," "the apostles" assembled together on the occasion, "the apostles" agreed unanimously in the decision, and the official document was issued in the name of "the apostles;" and all this without any evidence of the preëminence of one over the others. Hence it appears that the apostles were still exercising that supreme authority over the Church with which they had originally been invested by the Lord Jesus.

But the inquiry may arise, If the apostles were thus supremely authorized, could not any one of them have decided the question? and whence the necessity for calling the council? To this it may be replied, that this council was not convened for the purpose of enlightening the apostles, but to give greater influence to their decision, and secure harmony in the Church. Any one of the apostles could have decided the question; and Paul and Barnabas had already decided it. They "had no small dissension and disputation" with a portion of the Church at Antioch on the subject; but the authority of every apostle, and especially that of St. Paul, was not everywhere understood and acknowledged as it should have been. It was to remedy this evil, and to produce an acquiescence in the apostolic doctrine of justification by faith

alone, that this council deliberated, and issued their joint authoritative decrees.

If it be alleged that the fact that the apostles assembled to deliberate in council cannot comport with the view we have presented of the high prerogatives with which they were endowed, we reply: *First.* The "much disputing" which occurred in the council does not appear to have been a work of the apostles, but of others assembled with them. *Secondly.* The apostles spoke last of all, and were perfectly harmonious in their sentiments. *Thirdly.* It does not follow, from the fact that the apostles were inspired, that they were at all times favored so immediately with the divine guidance as entirely to supersede the importance of deliberation. *Fourthly.* It is evident that, in this matter, they acted under the immediate authority of God; for their decrees are prefaced with these words: "For it seemed good to the *Holy Ghost*, and to us."

But there is yet another important matter in connection with this council to be considered—the apostles were not *alone* on this occasion. The appeal was made unto "the apostles *and elders*." "The apostles *and elders* came together to consider of this matter;" the decision "pleased the apostles *and elders*, with *the whole Church;*" the epistle containing the decrees was in the name of "the apostles, *and elders, and brethren,*" and when the messengers went forth to the Churches, "they delivered them the decrees for to keep that were ordained of the apostles *and elders* which were at Jerusalem." Here the question arises, Who were these "elders and brethren?" and why are they associated with the apostles? The Presbyterian has fancied that the account here given furnishes a clear divine warrant for depositing the sovereign power of Church-government in the Kirk-session, composed of the minister and several lay elders; or a model for a presbytery or synod, composed of clerical and lay representatives.

As to the peculiar character of these "elders"—whether they were ministers or mere laymen—that is a question which can have no bearing upon the point now in hand. Our present inquiry is this: Did the apostles transmit to these "elders" the right to exercise that sovereign power in the Church which, as we have seen, they themselves had received of the Lord Jesus? We do not inquire whether the apostles so transferred this power out of their hands upon these "elders" as to cease to possess it themselves. No one supposes they did this. But the question is, Were these elders divinely authorized by the apostles to exercise the same sovereign jurisdiction over the Church which the apostles exercised?

We think that the mere fact that the Church at Antioch sent their

question up to "the apostles *and elders*" can furnish no evidence that these "elders" possessed authority equal to that of the apostles. The fact that the contentious Judaizers of that Church were not at once satisfied with the decision and arguments of Paul and Barnabas, is proof conclusive that they either did not understand or did not appreciate the high prerogatives of the apostolic office; hence they desired the apostles' decision to be corroborated by the sanction of the elders of the first established Church at Jerusalem. It is also reasonable to suppose that the great body of the Church at Antioch, however well satisfied they themselves might be with the judgment of Paul and Barnabas, would desire also the corroborating testimony of the "apostles and elders," knowing that such decision would tend greatly to the production of general satisfaction on the vexed question.

But it seems the elders did meet with the apostles, and probably took part in the deliberation; and it is demanded, Why did the apostles permit this, unless the elders possessed equal powers with themselves? To this we reply, that although the apostles possessed the right, *ex cathedrâ*, to decide all matters concerning the Church, yet they were prudent administrators, and, as such, they frequently consulted with others, and were ready to listen to their arguments. When the "seven deacons" were appointed, although the apostles possessed in themselves the sovereign *right* of appointment, yet they submitted their selection to the congregation. Even so here, although the apostles, as a college, or any one of them alone, possessed a divine right to decide the matter in controversy, yet they chose to exercise that right in such form as would be likely to wield the greatest influence over the Churches generally, and be productive of the most satisfactory and beneficial results. Hence, not only "the elders" were consulted, but the approval of "the whole Church" was secured, and the decretal epistle was in the name of "the apostles, *and elders, and brethren.*"

The only question involved in the matter we are now discussing is that of *authority.* Did the "elders," or "the elders and brethren," possess the same divine authority to act in the premises which belonged to the apostles? To suppose that they did, would imply that they could have decided the matter without the ratification of the apostles—yea, that any one of them could have issued a divinely authoritive decision; for it is certain that the official act of any one of the apostles would have been clothed with all the authority of Heaven. But will any one suppose that a decision from one of the "elders," or from "the elders and the whole Church," would have been authoritative without the apostolic seal? It was *this* which fixed upon the decrees the stamp of

the divine authority. The Lord Jesus Christ had said to his chosen "twelve": "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." It was this unfailing promise which secured to the apostles, in all their official acts, the divine guidance, and authorized them to preface their decrees with these remarkable words: "It seemed good to *the Holy Ghost*, and to us."

We think it must now be manifest that the history of this council presents no proof that the sovereign power in the government of the Church belonged as yet to any person or persons but the apostles.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VI.

QUESTION 1. What is the first thing to be considered in the investigation of the character of a government?

2. What five leading views are stated with regard to the depository of the highest authority in Church-government, and by whom have they been respectively advocated?

3. Are the Scriptures explicit on this question?

4. What may we infer from the authority with which the apostles were invested?

5 In the beginning of Christ's religion, why could not the power of government have existed in the congregations?

6 What is proved on the subject from the second and fourth chapters of The Acts of the Apostles?

7. What is the argument in reference to the "seven deacons," whose appointment is recorded in the sixth chapter of The Acts?

8. In reference to this case, what *four facts* are inferred?

9. What is the argument on the subject founded on the account given of the council at Jerusalem, in the fifteenth chapter of The Acts?

10. Who met with the apostles in this council?

11. Were the apostles all harmonious in their opinions?

12. Were the decrees of the council *authoritative?*

13. What *fact* gave them the seal of divine authority?

14 In whom, then, does it appear that the sovereign power of government as yet was deposited?

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY — DEPOSITED IN THE ORDAINED ELDERSHIP.

HAVING seen in the preceding chapter that the inspired apostles, while they remained with the Church, possessed and exercised supreme governmental control over it, we now inquire to whom they committed the permanent exercise of this prerogative.

In the first place, that Timothy and Titus, as evangelists, were commissioned by the Apostle Paul to exercise, under his directions, apostolic jurisdiction—the one at Ephesus, and the other in Crete—is very clear from the apostolic epistles. That this jurisdiction extended not only over Churches, but likewise over ministers, is also manifest. But there is no evidence that the apostles placed a similar control in the hands of an individual minister over the ministers and Churches generally, or in any other place.

Now, the question arises, what is the reasonable inference from the fact, as above stated? That we may be the better judge of this matter, we will examine the record. In 1 Tim. i. 3, 4, St. Paul says to Timothy: "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith; so do." And in the eighteenth verse: "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy," etc. Here we see a solemn charge committed by St. Paul to Timothy, imparting jurisdictional prerogative over the Church at Ephesus, both of the ministers and laity.

In the third chapter of this epistle, St. Paul delivers to Timothy minute instructions as to the character and qualifications of bishops and deacons. And this is evidently done that Timothy might be the better able to select and ordain suitable persons for those offices, and retain only such in office; or, at least, call the unworthy to account for improper conduct. He says: "Let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless." Near the

close of the chapter, St. Paul adds: "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mightest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God."

In the fourth chapter, after having delivered various directions and admonitions concerning the doctrine that should be preached, he says: "These things *command* and teach. Let no man despise thy youth"—that is, not only teach the pastors what they should preach, but "*command*" them, exercise authority over them; and lest they be unwilling to be supervised by so young a man, take heed to be grave in thy deportment—"Let no man despise thy youth."

In the fifth chapter, Timothy is instructed how to proceed in admonishing the "elders": "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father." In the same chapter we read: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward. Against an elder, receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins."

We think it must be apparent to the candid mind that no consistent interpretation can be put upon this paragraph without finding in it the most conclusive evidence that Timothy was invested with the high prerogatives of the apostolate, both as it regards government and ordination.

First. His jurisdiction extended even to the matter of the ministers' salaries: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor." Chrysostom, Whitby, Scott, Benson, Clarke, and all the best critics, agree that this "double honor" means "a more liberal maintenance." Dr. Clarke affirms that "almost every critic of note allows that τιμή here signifies reward, stipend, wages." Now Timothy, as exercising apostolic rule over pastors and Churches, was to see to it that the pastors' salaries were adjusted in proportion to the extent of their labors.

Again. Instructions were given as to the manner in which an elder should be brought to account for his conduct: "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses." He is also directed how he should administer reproofs: "Them that sin rebuke before all." He is solemnly charged to "observe these things without preferring one before another."

Lastly. He is not only fully instructed as to his superintendency over elders, deacons, and people, but he is directed how to proceed in the exercise of his apostolic jurisdiction.

Near the close of this Epistle St. Paul repeats his solemn charge to Timothy in the following words: "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." And again he adds: "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust." We may understand the apostle here, by the word "commandment," as embracing the entire summary of instruction contained in this Epistle. *This* he is charged to keep "until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." On this Dr. Clarke comments thus: "Hand it down pure, and let thy conduct be a comment on it, that it may continue in the world and in the Church till the coming of Christ."

In the second Epistle to Timothy we have his ordination and investiture, with the prerogatives of his office, specifically named: "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." 2 Tim. i. 6. "That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." 2 Tim. i. 14. "And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." 2 Tim. ii. 2.

In these passages we see Timothy expressly authorized to invest other "faithful men" with the ministerial functions, implying provision for the perpetuation of an ordained ministry in the Church.

We next examine the Epistle to Titus. In the fifth verse of the first chapter, the investiture of Titus with the prerogatives of the apostolate is set forth: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." Notice, first, the work assigned him: He is to "set in order the things that are wanting." This is a general, broad commission, embracing every thing pertaining to the organization of the Churches. St. Paul proceeds, as he had done in the case of Timothy, to specify the kind of persons to be ordained to the presbyterate: "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faith-

ful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, . . . whose mouths must be stopped." And in the nineteenth verse, he commands Titus to "rebuke" false teachers "sharply."

Again, in the fifteenth verse of the second chapter, we read these words: "These things speak, and exhort, and *rebuke with all authority.*" In the tenth verse of the third chapter, we have these words: "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject."

On the subject of the quotations just made we need not enlarge They are so explicit concerning the authority with which Titus was invested that their force cannot easily be evaded. We here find, first, a minute description of the kind of persons to be ordained to the ministerial office. Secondly, Titus is instructed to silence some, for the apostle designates certain characters "whose mouths must be stopped."

Again, he is instructed on the subject of official admonitions. He is told to "rebuke with all authority." Not only to deliver a *friendly* "rebuke," but an *authoritative* one — to "rebuke with *all* authority." Finally, he is clothed with authority to *excommunicate:* "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject."

In reference to Timothy and Titus, we present the following general remarks:

From the scriptures adduced, it is evident that neither the Congregational nor the Presbyterian form of Church-government could have existed in those districts at that time. On the supposition that either of those forms of government had already been set up, these itinerant *intruders,* as they would have been considered, would have been promptly met by the congregations or the Church-sessions, as the case might have been, and repulsed with such language as the following: "What high and unconstitutional pretensions are *these* which you set up over us? We *elect* and *induct* our own pastors; we have our Church-session through which we administer discipline, our presbyters judge of the qualifications of candidates for orders, and perform the ordination service." It is most evident, upon the supposition that either Congregationalism or Presbyterianism had been set up, that the commissions of Timothy and Titus would have come in direct conflict with those systems, and could not have been carried out. And it is also clear that, while those Churches continued to recognize Timothy and Titus with the authority committed to them by the apostle, neither of those forms of government could have originated. That the power of government, in these instances, was vested in Timothy and Titus, is

undeniable. It was neither exercised by the congregation collectively, nor by the minister in connection with his lay elders.

The argument for High-church Episcopalianism, founded on the cases of Timothy and Titus, may easily be shown to be sophistical, when met in a proper, scriptural manner. It is not, however, to be overturned by a denial of the fact that Timothy and Titus were invested with episcopal jurisdiction over both Churches and ministers in their respective fields for a specific purpose, and under apostolic appointment. The sophistry in the argument referred to consists in concluding from this fact, that therefore this was the settled apostolic plan, adopted by the apostles everywhere, and by them commanded to be carried out and perpetuated.

It cannot be proved that the apostolic jurisdiction of Timothy and Titus was a permanent settlement of authority in them. Indeed, it is most obvious that they acted in the capacity of temporary agents of St. Paul, doing his specific bidding in reference to matters to which he had not time to give his personal attention.

Again, the fact that the Churches of Ephesus and Crete, and the ministers already among them, were apostolically recognized as such before the episcopal miter, here claimed for Timothy and Titus, had been conferred, together with the fact that, among the numerous other Churches organized, and ministers set apart, under the apostolic administration, there is no intimation that any such arrangement as that in reference to Timothy and Titus was intended or authorized, demonstrates clearly that the plea here urged for Episcopalianism, as of *divine right*, is unfounded and fallacious. We can find nothing in the case of these evangelists, or anywhere else in Scripture, to sanction the position that the office of a bishop pertains to an *order* in the ministry superior to that of a presbyter, and by *divine right* having control over the eldership, and the sole right to ordain. We must conclude that this is an assumption of prerogative wholly unwarranted by the word of God.

Yet since it is clear that Timothy and Titus were endued with a temporary episcopal jurisdiction over ministers and Churches in their respective fields, we may very rationally infer that, under some circumstances, the episcopal form of government may be preferable to any other; and *on the ground of expediency*, not of *divine right*, may advantageously be adopted.

From what has been already presented from the Scriptures, we think the following positions are manifestly inferable:

1. That during the lives of the inspired apostles, supreme authority,

not only to unfold the doctrines of Christianity, but also to organize and govern the Church, was divinely vested in them.

2. That the apostles exercised this authority, so far as practicable, by their own personal agency and immediate supervision, but that in the work of organizing and governing the Churches, as a matter of convenience, they sometimes intrusted their high prerogative to certain approved evangelists (as Timothy and Titus), under specific instructions, as their selected agents or deputies.

3. But since there is no evidence that these high prerogatives of government, so clearly pertaining to the inspired apostles and the evangelists under them, were transferred to any others, therefore the inference is plain that such apostolic prerogatives were *extraordinary*, and not intended to be perpetuated in the Church.

4. Since it is indisputable that many Churches existed under the apostolic administration, over whom no minister was placed as superintendent over ministers and Churches, with such high prerogatives as were conferred on Timothy at Ephesus, and Titus in Crete, it necessarily follows that, though an episcopal organization after that model may be *expedient* and *advisable* in certain cases, yet there is no ground for the inference that such high prerogatives pertain to any class of ministers by *divine right*, or in virtue of a superiority of *order;* or that other Churches, not thus superintended, are not apostolically constituted, nor the ordinances by them administered valid and efficacious.

Where, it may well be asked, is the first syllable of testimony to show that the apostles placed the Churches at Rome, at Corinth, at Thessalonica, at Antioch, at Philippi, or even at Jerusalem, under a jurisdiction like unto that given to Timothy at Ephesus, or to Titus in Crete? And yet *these* were all *bona fide* apostolic Churches, the inspired apostles themselves being the judges. Can it therefore, we demand, be consistent with Christian meekness for any one claiming to be a follower of Christ to denounce as no branch of *the* Church such Churches as the inspired apostles themselves planted and watered, and recognized?

That episcopacy, in the modern acceptation of the term, cannot be maintained from the Scriptures as of *divine right*, or as essential to the *validity*, or even to the *apostolicity*, of either Churches, ministers, or sacraments, is a position, in connection with Church-polity, which we consider perfectly impregnable. The impartial student of ecclesiastical history will find that the same ground that we here assume has been occupied by many of the wisest and best informed in the Church from the earliest ages, and at all subsequent periods. It was the platform of

Cyprian in the third century, of Epiphanius and Jerome in the fourth century, and was maintained by Luther, Calvin, Cranmer, Wesley, and a mighty host of distinguished scholars and divines, in more modern times. This position is not only more consonant with Scripture, but is certainly more consistent with the mild charity and wide-expansive catholicity of the gospel than that pent-up and exclusive dogma which struts forth in assumed dignity, exclaiming, "We are *the* Church: with us alone are Christ's valid ministers, and all others are intruders—with us alone are the valid ordinances administered, and the covenanted mercies of Heaven sealed!" Let episcopacy, as the Bible warrants, place itself on the ground of expediency, and bishops above presbyters, as Jerome says, "by the custom of the Church," and not of *divine right*, and many others may, with Wesley, "prefer the episcopal form of Church-government."

If, then, as we have endeavored to show, the apostles have not transferred the high prerogatives of Church-government which they possessed and exercised to a superior *order* in the ministry to be perpetuated in the Church as their successors in this jurisdiction, the question arises, To whom did they transfer the governmental power of the Church? and in what sense is this power to be understood?

To the above inquiry we reply, that the New Testament teaches plainly that *the government of the Church is committed to the ordained presbyters, or elders.*

This will appear from the following scriptures: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you *overseers*." Acts xx. 28. The term here used, ἐπισκόπους, means bishops, or superintendents; hence the apostle here teaches that these Ephesian elders were constituted by "the Holy Ghost" the rulers of the Churches. Again, the same apostle, in specifying the qualifications of an "elder," says, he should be "one that *ruleth* well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; for if a man know not how to *rule* his own house, how shall he *take care* of the Church of God?" 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5.

St. Peter says to the "elders": "Feed the flock of God which is among you, *taking the oversight thereof*." 1 Pet. v. 2. The Greek word here used is ἐπισκοποῦντες, meaning that these "elders" were to exercise the office of *bishop, overseer*, or *superintendent*, over the Church, clearly implying an apostolic delegation of the ruling power to them. Once more, St. Paul says: "Obey them that have *the rule over you*, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account." Heb. xiii. 17. Here it is manifest that the *ruling power* in

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the Churches is vested in those ministers who are placed over them as their pastors or spiritual guides.

In the second and third chapters of the book of Revelation, our Saviour delivers a special and solemn address to the "angel" of each of the seven principal Churches of Asia. From these addresses we think it apparent that the power of government in each of those Churches was neither in the whole congregation nor in the minister and his lay elders, but in the presiding minister placed as "overseer" in pastoral charge of the Church. Thomas Scott says this angel was "the stated messenger, or embassador, of Christ among them." Benson says, he was "the pastor, presiding elder, or bishop, called an angel because he was God's messenger." Dr. Clarke says: "By '*angel*,' we are to understand the *messenger*, or person sent by God to preside over this Church." And in reference to Ephesus, he adds: "The angel or bishop at this time was most probably *Timothy*, who presided over that Church before St. John took up his residence there, and who is supposed to have continued in that office till A.D. 97."

Critics and commentators are agreed that the "angel" was the messenger, bishop, or pastor, presiding over the Church at the time; hence it appears that the power of government in these Churches, respectively, was vested in this "angel." To *him* the addresses were sent. *He* is admonished, censured, or threatened with punishment for the disorder or heresy of the Church. Now, if the power of government was in the hands of the whole congregation, or of the minister and lay elders, why is this "angel" *alone* held responsible? Upon the supposition that in each of those Churches the minister in charge was invested with the power of government, the whole matter is plain; but upon any other hypothesis, it is inexplicable.

From the scriptural proofs presented, it is unquestionable that the right of government and the administration of the discipline of the Churches are placed in the hands of the elders, or ministers, having the pastoral charge thereof. But as there is no specific restriction or instruction to the contrary, they may of course, so far as they deem it expedient, exercise this governing power through the medium of councils, conventions, synods, conferences, or presbyteries; or they may commit the exercise of a portion of this prerogative to certain chief ministers, styled bishops, general superintendents, or presiding elders. And that such was the practice of the Church, even in apostolic times, we have ample evidence in the history of the famous council at Jerusalem, and in the special prerogatives with which Timothy and Titus were invested.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VII.

QUESTION 1. With what kind of authority did St. Paul invest Timothy and Titus?

2. Is there any evidence that they conferred similar power on any other minister, or established similar regulations in any other place?

3. What is the testimony quoted from the Epistles to Timothy?

4. What is the testimony quoted from the Epistle to Titus?

5. In reference to Timothy and Titus, what general remarks are made?

6. What is the argument, founded on what is said in the second and third chapters of Revelation, concerning the "angels" of the seven Churches of Asia?

7. From the arguments adduced, where was the highest power of Church-government vested during the lives of the apostles and evangelists?

8. Is there any evidence that these high prerogatives were conferred on any other persons?

9. What is the inference from this fact?

10. Did many apostolic Churches exist, that were not placed under a similar regimen to those of Ephesus and in Crete, under Timothy and Titus?

11. What is the inference to be drawn from this fact?

12. Where, then, did the apostles deposit the power of Church-government?

13. What scriptures prove that this power was deposited in the ordained ministry?

14. What two general conclusions are arrived at from the foregoing?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MINISTRY—DIFFERENT ORDERS—ORDINATION OF THE MINISTRY—ITS CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCHES.

THE Christian Church is evidently an institution not only divine in its origin, but vastly important in its character. As is clear from the Scriptures, it was intended by its sovereign Founder that it should supersede the Mosaic institution, and "break in pieces and consume" all earthly kingdoms. According to the decree of God, it was to be universal in extent and everlasting in duration. Such being its character and importance, we might reasonably suppose that, in the divine arrangement and procedure, it would not only be furnished with an inspired code of moral and religious duty, of faith and practice—a clear exposition of the plan of salvation under the gospel—but also with an intelligible outline of the great and leading features of the organization and polity of the Christian Church itself, so far as necessary to its validity, purity, and success.

I. Among the prominent features connected with the organization of the apostolic Churches, it will strike the careful examiner that the CHRISTIAN MINISTRY occupies a conspicuous place. This ministry was instituted by the great Head and Founder of the Church as the leading instrumentality through which the gospel should be propagated, Churches organized, and the ordinances and discipline duly administered.

In the New Testament a variety of terms are used to designate the office-bearers of the Church. We are not, however, authorized to suppose that each of these terms points to a separate and distinct officer. St. Paul gives the following enumeration: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." Eph. iv. 11. In addition to these, we are informed that the Church was supplied with bishops, elders, and deacons. It is very evident that all these different terms are not intended each to describe a separate and distinct officer. It is manifest that the peculiar work indicated by several of these terms often pertains to the same person,

and *that* person was designated sometimes by one of the terms, and sometimes by another. St. Paul more than once styles the same persons both bishops and elders. The import of the terms themselves will plainly indicate the sense in which they were used, thus:

1. The term "*apostle*" signifies *one sent;* and in this sense it is applicable to every minister *called and sent of God* to preach the gospel, and is evidently, as has already been shown, intended to be perpetuated to "the end of the world."

2. The term "*prophet*" means *one who foretells;* and, in this connection, is applicable to every minister of the gospel, implying that he proclaims the promises of God to the faithful, and his denunciations against the wicked.

3. The term "*bishop*" means *overseer*, or *superintendent*, and applies to every gospel minister as he may have the spiritual oversight of a Church, or of Churches and ministers.

4. The term "*presbyter*," or "*elder*," denotes *one of age or experience*, or, in this connection, *one ordained with ministerial authority* for the governmental control of a Church or Churches.

5. The term "*deacon*" means *one who serves* or *acts for others*, and applies to those ministers who were ordained in special charge of the poor and the sick. That these were not mere laymen, appears not only from the fact of their ordination, and from the additional fact that several of the deacons ordained in the Church at Jerusalem were able and successful preachers, but from the necessary qualifications of this order, as stated by St. Paul.

6. The term "*pastor*" signifies *a shepherd*, and applies to every minister placed in care of a Church.

7. The term "*evangelist*" denotes *a proclaimer of good news*, and applies to every gospel minister, as he may spread the gospel abroad, or get up new Churches.

8. The term "*teacher*" implies *one who instructs*, and pertains to every minister of the gospel, as he may expound the sacred word.

From the foregoing it will be readily perceived that *nearly all* these offices may meet in the same person, or that a person may be authorized to perform *only a small portion* of them. In the New Testament view, all of God's ministers in this wide sense are *apostles*, for they are all called and *sent of God* to preach; they are all *prophets*, for they all authoritatively declare the promises of God to the faithful, and his threatenings against the wicked; and they are all *teachers*, for they all, more or less, explain the gospel system. But they are not all *pastors*, for all have not the care of Churches: they are not all *evangelists*, for

all are not engaged in spreading the gospel in new places, or organizing new Churches; they are not all *deacons*, for all are not ordained to minister to the sick and the poor; they are not all *elders*, for all are not ordained as spiritual rulers of the Church; nor are all *bishops*, for all do not preside over Churches, or over Churches and ministers.

That deacons are the *inferior* order of ministers, and elders, or bishops, the *superior* order, appears from these words of St. Paul: "They that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith." This clearly implies promotion to a higher position in the ministry.

II. As respects *the* NATURE *of that government* which the office-bearers are warranted in exercising over the Christian Church, it is purely *spiritual*. Christ's kingdom being "not of this world," the rulers of his Church have no authority to inflict pains and penalties by fines, imprisonment, or corporal punishment, like civil governments, but must rely solely on admonition, reproof, and excommunication. It is plainly the duty of the rulers of the Church to advise and counsel with those over whom they exercise spiritual control, and secure, as far as may be, their approval and coöperation; but still these Church-rulers are held responsible to the Head of the Church — "who hath counted them worthy, putting them into the ministry"—as much for the due administration of his ordinances and discipline as for the faithful preaching of his word; and hence they cannot, as faithful stewards, relinquish to the laity this governmental responsibility with which they have been intrusted by the Lord Jesus.

The *constitution and laws* according to which the government and discipline of the Church should be administered, are comprised in the New Testament; and these statutes are not subject to modification, amendment, or repeal. But should the rulers of the Church attempt to "lord it over God's heritage," the remedy of the people against any supposed usurpation or maladministration is in remonstrance, protestation, appeal to a higher ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and finally, when the evil becomes so great that it can only be submitted to by the sacrifice of a good conscience, withdrawal from a corrupt and apostate Church.

ORDINATION OF THE MINISTRY.

We now present it as one of the foundation principles in connection with the ministry of the New Testament Church, that—

Each organized Church should be placed under the pastoral charge of one or more ordained elders or ministers; and other ministers, not in pastoral care of Churches, should be employed as evangelists or missionaries

for the purpose of spreading the gospel, and getting up and organizing new Churches.

Christ "ordained twelve that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach." Mark iii. 14.

The apostles, with the solemnities of prayer and the casting of lots, set apart Matthias to fill the vacancy in the apostolate caused by the apostasy of Judas (Acts i.).

The apostles, by prayer and the laying on of hands, consecrated chosen men to the office of deacon (Acts vi.).

Saul and Barnabas, by the solemnities of fasting, prayer, and the laying on of hands, were set apart to the special work of a mission to the Gentiles (Acts xiii.).

Timothy was consecrated by the laying on of the hands of St. Paul and of the presbytery (1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6).

Timothy and Titus, under the express instructions of St. Paul, ordained elders and deacons, of approved character, in all the Churches in Crete and the regions of Ephesus (1 Tim. iii., v. 22; Titus i. 5.).

From these examples, recorded in the inspired history of the Christian Church, of numerous approved persons being expressly chosen and solemnly ordained to the ministerial office, and in the absence of any intimation that any were allowed to exercise the functions of the sacred office without such approval and ordination, we deduce the inference that an *ordained ministry* is the divinely established instrumentality through which a properly organized Church was to be established and perpetuated, and the ordinances and discipline duly administered.

IV. We next invite attention to the CONNECTION established, according to the New Testament history, between the *ministers* and the *Churches.*

On this point, in modern times, a diversity of sentiment has obtained. Some have contended for the ordination of a *settled pastorate* over all the Churches, whilst others have advocated a *transient itinerancy* as being most in accordance with the apostolic plan.

If we understand the teachings of the New Testament on this subject, the elements of the regular pastorate relation and of the itinerancy were both embodied in the apostolical plan and operations. The one was needed for the government and pastoral charge of organized Churches; the other for the spreading of the gospel and the getting up of new Churches.

The apostles were extraordinary ministers, endued with all the authority of Christ himself in the establishment, organization, and control

of the Churches. In the grand commission under which they acted, they were commanded to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." As yet no Churches existed under the New Testament economy. The world was before them as their parish. Accordingly we find them traveling at large, gaining converts to the new faith, and organizing Churches.

Others, such as Timothy, Titus, and Barnabas, were soon ordained to the ministry, and associated with the apostles as evangelists or missionaries in the great work of extending the influence of the gospel abroad, and organizing Churches in distant lands; hence it is clear that we find in the history of the Church, as recorded in the New Testament, ample authority for an *itinerant* ministry in the propagation of the gospel. This was the grand evangelistic or missionary lever which, under God, "turned the world upside down," and in one century spread the doctrines of the cross commensurate with the Roman Empire.

On the other hand, it is equally clear, from the testimony of New Testament history, that, in all places where the apostles, or the evangelists under them, established and organized Churches, they placed over them regular pastors having the oversight and care thereof. To this important feature in New Testament history we now turn our attention.

In the fourteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we have an account of the course pursued by the apostles in the organization of the Churches. St. Paul and St. Barnabas, according to the record, took an extensive tour in visiting the newly-formed Churches, "confirming the brethren," and setting things in order. They "ordained them elders in every Church" to exercise over these several congregations the pastoral care. Dr. Clarke, in his comment on the twenty-third verse of this chapter says: "They appointed persons, the most experienced and the most advanced in the divine life, to *watch over* and *instruct* the rest." And he adds: "I believe the simple truth to be this, that in ancient times the people chose, by the lifting up of hands, their spiritual pastor; and the rulers of the Church, whether apostles or others, appointed that person to his office by the imposition of hands."

Upon the same passage Mr. Benson remarks: "This custom of ordaining elders in the Churches which he planted Paul invariably observed, in order that the brethren, being united together under the direction of stated teachers and leaders, might increase the more in grace."

As an evidence that such was the general course in all the apostolic Churches, we find St. Paul giving express instructions to Titus as to the course to be pursued in the Churches in Crete, which at that time was

a very populous island, containing, as historians state, about a hundred cities; and yet St. Paul tells Titus to "ordain elders in every city." And he then goes on to describe the character and duties of these elders, in such style as to leave the conclusion inevitable that they were to be the regular pastors and rulers of the Churches. Mr. Benson, in commenting on this passage, remarks as follows: "That is, that thou shouldest perfect what was left unfinished at my departure, or mightest settle the affairs which I had not time to settle myself; and 'ordain elders (pastors or teachers, the same with bishops) in every city' where there are Churches."

Here, then, we have the testimony of Mr. Benson that these "elders" were regular pastors, and that every Church, according to the instructions of St. Paul, was to be thus supplied. Dr. Clarke's comment on the passage is in the following words: "It appears from this that St. Paul did not spend much time in Crete, and that he was obliged to leave it before he had got the Church properly organized. '*Ordain elders in every city*,' that thou mightest appoint persons well instructed in divine things, who should be able to instruct others, and *observe and enforce the discipline of the Church*. It appears that those who are called 'elders' in this place are the same as those termed 'bishops,' verse seventh."

Now, according to Dr. Clarke, St. Paul did not consider a Church "properly organized" till a *regular pastor*, or bishop, was ordained and placed over it as its stated *teacher and ruler*. Perhaps it would be superfluous to give the testimony of any additional commentators on the passages under review; but, lest it might be thought that the views of Benson and Clarke are not in accordance with the general sentiment of learned commentators, we add a few other authorities.

Mr. Burkitt, in his notes on Acts xiv. 23, uses the following language: "Here we have two farther instances of the apostle's care of these new-planted Churches; and the first was, to settle them in *Church-order*, ordaining elders in every Church to be the guides and teachers of the rest." Here it appears, according to Burkitt, that, without a regular pastor ordained over each and every Church, the Churches could not be "settled in Church-order." On Titus i. 5, Mr. Burkitt remarks as follows: "*To 'ordain elders in every city*,' such as might *govern*, and *teach*, and administer to God in holy things; wherever a Church is planted, there is an absolute necessity of a settled ministry."

Dr. Macknight gives it as his opinion, in his comment on Titus i. 5, that "elders were to be ordained in every city where the converts were so numerous as to form a Church."

Thomas Scott, in his comment on Acts xiv. 23, says: "These elders were their *stated pastors*, who presided in the worship of God, and preached his word unto them."

We will not stay longer to quote from commentaries on the subject before us. The testimony given from Clarke and Benson, especially as we find the highest authorities in the Episcopalian and Presbyterian ranks coinciding with them in opinion, is sufficient to satisfy us that, without the utmost violence to the text, no other construction than the one we have presented *can* be given to the passages. Indeed, we may say, fearless of successful contradiction, that the great mass of learned commentators agree with Clarke and Benson in asserting that over all the apostolic Churches *regular ruling pastors* were placed; and, till such was the case, they were not considered "properly organized."

Therefore we may conclude that the New Testament history sufficiently demonstrates the following points:

1. That a *regularly ordained ministry* is established.

2. That this ministry comprises, *first*, an *itinerant evangelistic department*, for the spreading of the gospel and the getting up and organizing of new Churches; and, *secondly*, a *regular pastorate relation*, for taking care of the Churches organized.

We will next call attention to the confirmatory evidence on this subject furnished by *the history of the Church in succeeding ages.*

Aside from the Acts of the Apostles, the earliest Church-history which has come down to us is that of Eusebius. This author wrote in the fourth century, and brings down the history of the Church to the Council of Nice, which took place in the year 325. He is the only author who wrote a history of the Church during the centuries immediately succeeding the apostles, whose writings have reached us; consequently all subsequent writers have been mainly dependent on him for their account of the Church during that period. Eusebius is the more valuable as a Church-historian because he quotes extensively from the writings of others, furnishing us in this way with the only extracts now extant from the works of various individuals in reference to the Church in those primitive times. He says himself that he had "collected the materials that had been scattered by his predecessors, and culled, as from some intellectual meadows, the appropriate extracts from ancient authors."

On the points to which we have directed our present inquiry, Eusebius is very clear and satisfactory. He gives, in regular and consecutive order, the names of the bishops of a number of the principal Churches, even from the apostles themselves down to his day, and often specifies

the number of years they respectively served. Among the principal Churches concerning which he is thus specific, may be mentioned that of Rome, of Alexandria, of Ephesus, of Antioch, of Jerusalem, and of Corinth. He proceeds to give an account of the course pursued by many who, after the apostolic age, prosecuted the work of "evangelists," and who, in his own words, "after laying the foundation of the faith in foreign parts, as the particular object of their mission, and after appointing others as shepherds of the flocks, and committing to these the care of those that had been recently introduced, went again to other regions and nations, with the grace and coöperation of God."

Thus it appears that such as acted the part of missionaries or evangelists, after the apostles' day, still adhered to the same plan—they placed pastors over all the organized Churches. We believe it is admitted by all Christian writers of eminence on Church-polity that, from the time the apostles first "ordained elders in the Churches" down the stream of history for the space of three hundred years, there never was a Christian Church, properly organized, over which a regular pastor or pastors did not preside. We may, with safety, go even farther, and affirm that, while there is satisfactory evidence to prove that the general practice, both in the apostolic and succeeding ages, was to place regular ruling pastors over all the organized Churches, there is no evidence to show that there existed a solitary exception to the rule for the space of fifteen hundred years.

But what are we to infer from these facts? *First.* That the Churches were not left to their own government and control, on the plan of Independency. *Secondly.* That neither the *settled pastorate* principle nor the *itinerancy* should be adopted, to the exclusion of the other, but that the two should be blended.

One plan by which the elements of these two systems may be advantageously united is that of a *regular itinerancy*, giving to each Church a settled pastorate over it for a limited time, yet subject to a systematic and periodical change. Such is the general economy of Methodism. This system, while it comprehends more extensively than can be done by most Church-organizations the itinerant or evangelistic department, at the same time embraces, to a considerable extent, the settled pastorate relation; thus happily combining the two great gospel elements. It is true, this system, as a general rule, does not recognize a pastorate relation *settled for life;* but it is none the less really a *settled* or *fixed* relation, because the period of its unconditional continuance may be limited. A Church may have a pastorate regularly settled over it for twenty years, although the incumbent of the office may be changed a

dozen times. In this sense the pastorate over a Methodist Church never dies. The moment the pastoral jurisdiction of one minister ceases, that of another begins; so that the Church has always a pastor, and the pastor always a Church.

It must be admitted that the Methodist organization exhibits the evangelistic or missionary feature of the apostolic plan more fully and successfully than can be done by any other system known since the days of Timothy and Titus; and it may truly be doubted whether any other platform of organization approximates so nearly to the apostolic plan in keeping all the Churches regularly supplied with pastors. Among those Churches having no regular and systematic evangelistic or itinerant department, but organized with special reference to a settled pastorate relation, how many hundreds of them are left much of the time without pastors, and how many pastors without Churches! The essence of the pastorate relation depends less upon the question, whether it is a *life-time* or a *periodical* arrangement, than upon the fact as to the constancy and regularity of the supply of a pastor or pastors for each Church, and a Church or field of operation for each minister. If this be the essence of the apostolic plan, then it will follow that this plan is nowhere more fully and successfully realized than in connection with the Methodist organization.

The fact that regular pastors, exercising the power of government and control, were placed over all the apostolic Churches, is sufficient evidence that the government of the Churches was not modeled by the apostles either after the Congregational or the Presbyterian form. The power of government was neither vested in each congregation collectively, nor yet in the pastor and his lay elders; but in the *ordained ministerial elders.*

To what extent these ministerial elders, in whom we have shown the apostles deposited the power of jurisdiction and control over the Churches, may engage and admit the assistance and coöperation of the laity in the management of ecclesiastical affairs, is a question depending much upon considerations of expediency. We may safely conclude that such method should he pursued as will best secure the zealous and efficient aid and influence of the whole Church, and, at the same time, retain in the hands of the ordained ministry that highest power of government and control over the kingdom of Jesus Christ with which the Head of the Church has intrusted them.

Provided the two apostolical elements be retained and efficiently carried out, so as to secure a regular pastorate over the organized Churches, and an ample degree of evangelistic influence be sent abroad

for the spread of the gospel—provided these two grand objects be secured, it may well be left to the dictates of expediency to determine how transient or how permanent shall be the connection between the individual pastor and the flock of his charge. Whether that connection be continued for life, for a long period, or for a shorter period, to be determined by a presbytery, a conference, or a recognized episcopacy, or whether it be limited by a definite, agreed period, these are questions not settled by the New Testament record; and, consequently, each Christian organization may adopt such plan on the subject as they judge to be the best adapted to secure the grand objects of the gospel.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VIII.

QUESTION 1. What is named as one of the prominent features connected with the organization of the Christian Church?

2. What Scripture authority is given showing the origin and ordination of the Christian ministry?

3. What may be inferred from the fact that none but regularly authorized persons exercised the functions of the ministerial office?

4. What diversity of sentiment has prevailed in regard to the connection between the ministry and the Churches?

5. What two important elements on this subject are exhibited in the New Testament?

6. What Scripture testimony is adduced showing that a regular pastorate was placed over the organized Churches?

7. What two important positions are said to be demonstrated on this subject by the New Testament history?

8. What confirmatory evidence is given from Church-history?

9. What conclusive inferences are made from the facts presented?

CHAPTER IX.

THE CLAIMS OF INDEPENDENCY EXAMINED.

It is assumed by the advocates of Independency in Church-government—

1. That the laity composing a Church have the power of discipline, including the right to receive and exclude members.

2. That they have the right of electing their own pastors.

I. We will examine the proof of the position, that the laity have *the power of discipline*, and *the right of receiving and excluding members.*

1. The first proof of this position offered by the advocates of Independency, is founded upon the following scripture:

"Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." Matt. xviii. 15–17.

It is admitted on all hands, that our Lord did not set up and organize the Christian Church by his personal agency, but that he committed this work to his inspired apostles; hence the Christian Church dates its origin from the day of Pentecost, when the apostles were "endued with power from on high." Bearing in mind this admitted fact, it will readily be perceived how futile must be the attempt to prove, by the scripture adduced, that the Church-government is vested in the laity.

(1) The attempt is made to found an argument for Independency in the government of the Christian Church upon a regulation made, not in reference to that Church, but to a state of things previous to its existence. As the only Church or congregation of worshipers with which these disciples were now connected was that of the Jewish temple or synagogue, it was to *that* Church, and not to the Christian Church, that the Saviour referred. Surely it cannot be presumed that

he undertook to innovate upon the Jewish polity in reference to the synagogue service! And it is well known that these synagogues were governed by a select court of rulers, or elders, and not by the whole congregation on the principles of Independency. To attempt thus, as has been done, to prove Independency by this instruction of our Lord, given before the Christian Church had an existence, and having no reference whatever to its polity, is palpably illogical. As well might we plead that when our Saviour sent forth his apostles, saying, "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses; nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats"—as well might we contend that our Lord was thus prescribing the law of the Church, regulating the outfit of missionaries for all subsequent ages.

(2) The argument here postulated for Independency fails, because it substitutes a general direction relating to individual behavior for an ecclesiastical law for the government of the Christian Church. The scripture under review contains a salutary precept for regulating the deportment of the disciples in their association with each other and with their Jewish brethren, but not one word as to the polity of the Christian Church, which was not to be organized till after Pentecost. There is no intimation here given as to the form according to which the Christian Church should proceed in the trial and expulsion of an unruly member. Shall it be done through the medium of appropriate officers? and, if so, how are they to be chosen? and by what form inducted into office? by what laws is the case to be tried? and who shall interpret those laws? Or is the whole Church, as a collective body, to be prosecutor, advocate, judge, jury, and every thing else? Here we find not one word in reference to any of these important particulars; and the reason is obvious. Our Lord was not prescribing a code of laws or form of government for the Christian organization which the apostles were to erect after his departure. He was simply instructing his disciples in reference to their behavior in their intercourse and fellowship with each other as individuals. So far as his instructions embodied *principles* of behavior concerning Christian fellowship, they would apply, of course, after the organization of the gospel Church as well as before; but by no legitimate mode of interpretation can they shed any light as to the form of ecclesiastical polity.

"If thy brother trespass against *thee*," said our Saviour. Hence it is a private, personal offense, to which he refers, therefore take private means to reclaim him; but if these fail, "then tell it unto the Church"—that is, inform the Church *through her rulers*. For surely our Saviour would not encourage his disciples to ignore or set at naught the estab-

lished order of the synagogue; on the contrary, he encouraged submission to existing authorities, saying, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do." Matt. xxiii. 2, 3. But when the Church has thus, through her rulers, been informed of the sin of the offender, there is not one word here as to the form of the investigation. Was it before the whole Church, or before their stated rulers? On this question our Saviour is silent. But that the matter was adjudicated, not by the whole Church, but by the "rulers of the synagogue," cannot be denied.

Our Saviour proceeds: "If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican"—that is, after the Church has finished its proceedings, whatever they may have been, and failed to reclaim the offender, withdraw, as individual Christians, your fellowship from him.

2. The effort has also been made to prove that the power of discipline, with the right to receive and exclude members, is vested in the laity, by appealing to the testimony of St. Paul. The following passages have been relied on for this purpose:

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly." 2 Thess. iii. 6. "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses, contrary to doctrines which ye have learned, and avoid them." Rom. xvi. 17.

These passages only instruct Christians in reference to their deportment, as individuals, toward disorderly members—that is, they are admonished to avoid associating with disorderly persons; to shun their society; to come not under their influence; to be not contaminated by their example; to give them no countenance; not to "bid them God speed" in their sinful course.

3. Again: To show that the power of discipline is in the laity, strong reliance has been placed on the following text:

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump." 1 Cor. v. 7.

If, by "purging out the old leaven," the apostle means that the pestiferous member is to be expelled, he only expresses the general truth, that discipline should be so maintained as to preserve the body of the Church in a sound and healthy condition, free from the contagious influence of immorality; but as to the form or mode of procedure in the carrying out of that discipline, he utters not a word. The Church at Corinth, at that time, was composed of private members, together with ministers, officers, and rulers. Already parties had ranged themselves

under their respective leaders, clearly showing the existence of inequality among the people in the management of Church affairs. In this same Epistle, the apostle mentions the fact that these officers, rulers, or leaders, existed among them by divine appointment. His words are: "*God hath set* some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Cor. xii. 28.

Now, we demand, what right have we to infer that the apostle intended by the general exhortation to the Corinthians, "Purge out the old leaven," to establish a platform of Independency in Church-government? In this same letter he refers to an existing order of government, with officers of various grades and powers, and *that* under the appointment of God. These officers originated, not in the popular election of the Church, for the apostle declares, "*God hath set* some in the Church," referring the arrangement, not to voluntary Church-action, but to divine control. The apostle then proceeds in his enumeration expressly to mention "governments," clearly implying that the power of government had been placed in individuals, and was not deposited in the collective body according to Independency.

From the exhortation, "Purge out the old leaven," we can see no more ground for inferring Independency than any other form of Church-government. The exhortation was addressed to the ministers and officers of the Corinthian Church as much as to the laity. It only enjoins upon all—upon ministers, officers, and private members—the duty of maintaining the purity of the Church by wholesome discipline; but in what form that discipline is to be administered—whether according to Independency, Episcopalianism, Presbyterianism, or any other type of ecclesiastical rule—we must go elsewhere to learn.

II. The next question to be considered is, THE APPOINTMENT OF PASTORS TO THE CHURCHES.

Independency claims that *each particular Church has the right to elect its own pastor.*

In attempting to sustain this position, we might reasonably infer, judging *a priori*, that the abettors of Independency would either adduce a plain example, showing that such was the practice of the Christian Church under the apostolic administration, or that they would show an express precept to that effect. We cannot see how any thing short of one or the other of these methods of proof can avail for the purpose in hand; but we think it will appear in the sequel that they have not attempted either.

1. The first resort of Independency to prove the right of each Church

to elect its own pastor, is to what is said in the first chapter of The Acts in reference to the appointment of Matthias to fill the vacancy in the apostolate caused by the apostasy of Judas.

The total irrelevancy of the case here adduced to the point in hand, may be seen at a glance. Observe, the point to be proved is, that the body of members composing any Christian Church have the right to choose their own pastor. That this position cannot be established by reference to the case of Matthias, will appear from the following facts.

(1) Matthias was not chosen as *pastor of a Christian Church.*

(2) He was not chosen by the *members constituting a particular Christian Church.*

(3) He was not elected by *the votes of the disciples present, but by lot, after prayer for the divine direction.*

(4) In that prayer, the disciples repudiated the position that the prerogative of choosing in the case was vested in *them.* They prayed, saying, "Show whether of these two *thou hast chosen*"—thus proving that they recognized *no right of choice as existing in them.*

(5) This appointment of Matthias transpired, not only *previous to the organization of the Christian Church*, but before the apostles had been "endued with power from on high" for the execution of that work. Of course it can prove nothing as to the method of appointing the pastors of Christian Churches.

(6) There is no evidence that Matthias *ever did serve* as the pastor of a particular Christian Church.

(7) The disciples, in the case in hand, did not act of their own accord, but under the instruction of Peter, simply *yielding to his control.*

With these seven facts before us, no one of which can be disputed, and the admission of any one of which demonstrates the irrelevancy of the case of Matthias as proof of the point in question, we may be allowed to dismiss this first argument to establish the right of the laity to choose their own pastor. The attempt to found Independency upon the case of Matthias is a palpable failure.

2. Next. The attempt is made to prove the right of each Church to select its own pastor from the choosing of the "seven deacons," as recorded in the sixth chapter of The Acts.

This case comes nearer being applicable to the point in hand than the former, in *one* particular, and in *that only* — that is, it is not a case occurring anterior to the organization of the Christian Church. But that it as signally fails to prove that each Church has the right to choose its own pastor, is easily shown.

In addition to the remarks made on this subject in a preceding chap-

ter, we think it only necessary to fix the attention upon the following particulars:

(1) The disciples only did *as they were commanded by the apostles.* They did not proceed as though they considered themselves vested with the prerogative of doing as they pleased in the matter.

(2) The right of *appointment* was evidently not in the disciples, nor did they attempt to exercise it. It existed in and was exercised by the apostles.

(3) But, after all, what is fatal to the case as proof of the point in hand—*these deacons were not appointed as pastors of Churches.*

Wonderful logic! The argument of Independency is this: the apostles, whose right it was to "ordain elders in every city," and to organize all the Churches, giving to each Church the requisite officers, directed the Church at Jerusalem to select seven men, having specific qualifications, to superintend the collection and disbursement of the poor-fund of the Church; *therefore each Christian Church everywhere has the right to choose its own pastor!*

3. But to prove the position in question, Independency has resorted to the celebrated council at Jerusalem, whose history we have in the fifteenth chapter of The Acts.

Referring to what we have already said upon this subject in a former chapter, as in itself ample proof that nothing can be derived from this source in support of Independency, we need here add but little.

The facts, so far as they bear on the case, are briefly these: The Church at Antioch appealed to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem for the settlement of a question relating to Church-communion: the apostles and elders met in council, and, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, settled the question; but, *because* the laity were present and signified their approval—were "pleased" with the conclusion arrived at —*therefore* it is inferred that the laity, in every Christian Church, have the right to choose their own pastor.

The fallacy of the argument which would prove the point in hand, by the case referred to, may easily be shown.

(1) The question was not settled by "the whole Church," but by the "apostles and elders." "The whole Church" only assented to it, or were "pleased" with it.

(2) If the appeal had been made to "the whole Church," and "the whole Church" had settled the question in Church-capacity on the Congregational plan, and sent the Epistle officially as *their* Church-action. it could not avail the weight of a feather as a proof of the point in hand It had no relation whatever to the question of selecting Church-pastors

The argument for Independency, as founded on the action of this council, in logical form, is in substance as follows:

"The whole Church" at Jerusalem was once consulted in reference to *one matter*, therefore "the whole Church" in every place has the right to decide *another matter*, of an entirely different nature. Because "the whole Church" at Jerusalem approved or sanctioned the decision of the apostles and elders, that circumcision is not an essential prerequisite to communion, *therefore* every Church in every place, independently of "apostles and elders," may select its own pastor. We consider the reasoning that would find a ground for Independency in the case before us, too inconsequential to justify any farther notice.

4. The Christian Churches sometimes gave *letters of commendation* as an introductory passport to certain ministers when going among strangers.

This fact has been seized upon as proof that those Churches had the right to elect their own pastors. If the advocates of Independency can see any force in the argument they here predicate, we must say they can see what, to our perception, is undiscernible. Why these *letters* might not be as useful to a minister in connection with *one* as *another* mode of Church-government, is quite beyond our ken. If there could be any difference in the value of such *letters*, it would be likely to be in favor of those ministers who had their appointment from some other source than the collective body of the Church. If their appointment, as ministers, is from "the whole Church," they already possess all the indorsement the Church is able to impart; but if their appointment is from a bishop, a presbytery, a council, or a conference, a letter from a Church acquainted with their character and deportment may, under some circumstances, be very useful and satisfactory.

5. An effort has been made to found an argument on this question upon the fact that Christians are exhorted to "try the spirits," and to watch against the wiles of false prophets and false teachers.

Such characters they are exhorted to detect, to shun their influence, and not to "bid them Godspeed." This is all wholesome advice, and it seems to us just as necessary under one method of inducting ministers into office as another. Why can such advice be more needed or useful when each Church selects its own pastor than when they are otherwise supplied? Is it to be supposed that ministers elected by their respective Churches are less trustworthy or more to be suspected on that account? By whatever plan ministers may be appointed, unworthy persons cannot be kept from sometimes intruding into sacred places; and, while this is the case, it will continue to be the duty of all—both ministers and laity

—to "try the spirits," and to judge the tree by its fruit. But how the fact that it is the duty of all Churches and of all Christians to guard against the seductive wiles of false teachers, and the baneful influence of false doctrine—how this fact can demonstrate that the right exists in each Church to select its own pastor, is beyond our capacity to perceive. Mark, the duty of thus "trying the spirits," and of not receiving a false teacher "into our house," or "bidding him Godspeed," is not enjoined upon Churches, as such, more than upon individuals, as such. If, then, it proves that each Church has the right to select its own pastor, it must also prove that each individual possesses that right; and this would subvert all Church-organization, and lead directly to anarchy and confusion. To what absurd consequences must we be led, when we plant ourselves upon an unsound position!

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IX.

QUESTION 1. What two positions of Independency are here considered?

2. What is the first proof of the first position, and how is it shown to be insufficient?

3. Upon what other scriptures are arguments founded for this position, and how are they answered?

4. What is the second position of Independency here discussed?

5. What is the first argument founded upon, and how is it answered?

6. Upon what is the second argument founded, and how is it answered?

7. The third argument, and how answered?

8. What is the fourth argument, and how answered?

9. What is the fifth argument, and how is it answered?

CHAPTER X.

WRITTEN CREEDS, DISCIPLINES, AND CONFESSIONS OF FAITH.

It has been the practice of the Christian Church in all ages to adopt written symbols, creeds, forms of discipline, or confessions of faith, setting forth an outline of the belief and practice of her communicants. There have not been wanting, however, especially in modern times, persons, calling themselves Christians, who have repudiated and denounced all such written formulas as unauthorized, sinful, and pernicious. A brief chapter on this subject is rendered necessary, more by the zeal and pertinacity with which creeds and confessions of faith have been opposed than by any conviction that the arguments by which that opposition has been maintained possess in themselves much force, or even plausibility.

We are persuaded that the prejudice against creeds, in the abstract, has generally arisen from a superficial examination of the subject and an erroneous conception of the nature and design of creeds. This prejudice has no doubt been greatly aggravated by the *abuse* of creeds, of which the history of the Church furnishes us some painful examples and illustrations. But as it is admitted that the best things in the world may be abused or perverted, and that the *abuse* can furnish no good reason against the proper *use* of any thing whatever, it necessarily follows that it is palpably illogical to argue against the *use* of creeds from their *abuse*.

For an uninspired man or set of men to compose a creed, and attempt to enforce it upon others, whether it accords with their belief as to the teachings of the word of God or not, is certainly a usurpation. This would be "lording it over God's heritage," which the Bible condemns. It would be a renunciation of that great and hallowed principle —that "the Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants." It would be an unwarranted and flagrant intrusion upon that *liberty of conscience* everywhere recognized in Scripture.

I. The PROPRIETY and UTILITY of Church-creeds, disciplines, or confessions of faith, may be shown from the following considerations:

1. It will not be disputed that *the New Testament guarantees to every Christian the right, and enjoins upon him the duty, of "searching the Scriptures," and judging for himself what they teach.*

If this proposition be true, it necessarily follows that every one possesses also the right to communicate to others an abstract or summary of his belief in reference to *what* the Scriptures teach; and if he may make such communication at all, he may print it in a book and spread it before the world, so that all men may see and know the "reason of the hope that is in him." The book thus published is the author's *creed*, or an outline of his belief; and that he had the right thus to embody and set forth his faith no one can dispute, provided only that he do not attempt to enforce it upon others.

Now, if an individual Christian may thus adopt, write out, and publish his own creed, why not a Church or an association of Christians? And if they may thus adopt and publish their creed, what harm can there be in subscribing to such a creed, and voluntarily engaging to conform to and support the same? Were it the fact that an individual Christian, or a denomination of Christians, were endeavoring to coerce subscription to articles of faith, or obedience to a form of discipline, upon persons who had not voluntarily adopted those articles, and promised conformity to those rules of discipline, the case would be materially altered. Such a procedure would be spiritual tyranny of the most despicable character. But where, we ask, is this the case? where has it ever been the case among Protestants? In all these organizations none are required to become members, except on the voluntary principle. If we frame an outline of our faith and rules of discipline, all of which we believe to be "taught of God, even in his written word," and if these articles and rules are enforced upon none but such as of their own free will and accord adopt them, where is any infringement of liberty of conscience? where is any element of spiritual tyranny? While the voluntary principle, both in uniting with and withdrawing from the Church, is sacredly preserved, neither liberty of conscience can be trampled down, nor the reign of spiritual despotism inaugurated; hence we think it clear that all Christians and all Churches are fully authorized to embody their creed or discipline in a book, thus exhibiting an outline-draft of those fundamental principles which they believe to be taught in God's word.

2. Next, it may easily be shown that there must be an agreement among those united in Church association, as to the fundamentals of faith, and the general principles and form of discipline, or Christian union, harmony, and fellowship, and the great ends of Church organi

zation, cannot be secured. Without this agreement, how can the regular and orderly *public worship* of God be maintained? how can the *word* of God and the *sacraments* and *discipline* of the Church be duly and harmoniously administered?

(1) A creed or discipline is necessary for the orderly conducting of *the public worship* of God.

It is a common-sense position that a creed, or formula of discipline, may be just as authoritative and binding, and consequently as potent for good or evil, when only understood and *orally* sanctioned, as when *written;* therefore it would be entirely yielding the point in dispute for the no-creed party to say: "We will adopt no written creed, but we will in some way come to a *verbal* understanding as to the essential articles of faith and rules of order." Is it not as plain as any thing can be that the essential element of a creed consists not in the form or shape in which it is expressed, but in its subject-matter or substance? If you promise to pay your friend a given amount, is that promise any the less real or binding because it was not *written*, but only *verbal?* Upon the same principle, is not a *creed* or *rule* as really such, and as authoritative, when it has been explained and *agreed to*, as though *written down* and formally adopted? The unlawfulness of the creed, if any such quality there be, consists not in the fact that it has been *written*, but that it has been expressed in *uninspired language, and adopted.* Surely no sane person could even dream that there is any spiritual virus in the mere ink, paper, or materials of a book, rendering that sinful and pernicious, if reduced to a written form, which would be perfectly right and harmless if only uttered by the voice, and verbally adopted? If it be unlawful to write an article of faith or a rule of discipline in a book, and for a Church to adopt it in that form, how can it be lawful for the same Church to adopt the same article and rule when verbally expressed? The position that there is so essential a difference between the *written* and *verbal* form of expressing the same thing, that the one is *right* while the other is *sinful*, is too puerile to be seriously discussed. Hence it follows that the opposers of all human creeds, to render their practice consistent with their theory, must be able to conduct the public worship of God, and all the services, ordinances, and discipline of the Church, in a decent, orderly, and edifying manner, independent of any preägreement whatever on the subject.

Now, let us contemplate how great would be the confusion resulting from an attempt practically to carry out this principle. In the same congregation, where there is no preärrangement or understanding tending to a different result, we may suppose persons collected together, rep-

resenting every shade of belief among the diversified orders throughout the Christian world.

Public worship is to be attended to; but how shall it be conducted? Some might be in favor of a liturgy, while others would prefer the extemporaneous plan. How is the matter to be settled, when each is persuaded that he gets his views from the Bible? It is obvious there must be a general agreement on the question before they can proceed harmoniously; but by whatever form or process this agreement is reached—whether by vote of the whole society or otherwise—that agreement, so far as it extends, is virtually the adoption of a creed.

If we come to the question of Church-music, there might be still greater diversity of sentiment. Some might think the deep-toned organ an essential appendage to this service; others might oppose this, but contend for a well-trained choir; while others might prefer only the human voice, but strenuously object to the singing of any thing but Rouse's version of the Psalms; others would plead for congregational singing, including hymns and spiritual songs, conscientiously opposing all such appurtenances as instrumental music or choir-singing, as not authorized by the New Testament; but, last of all, some, brought up under Quaker influence, might oppose all music but what is *silent*, urging the apostolic precept, "Make melody in your heart to the Lord." How, we ask, is all this discord to be harmonized? Each professes to be guided by the Scriptures. There must, of course, be some agreement on the subject, but however that may be brought about, it will be in effect the adoption of a creed.

(2) Without some preärrangement, how is the regular *preaching of the word* to be secured?

Some might contend that the Christian ministry is not a distinct order, but that the right to preach and to administer the sacraments pertains as much to one person as to another, and that no appointment or consecration, in any form, is requisite; others might think that these prerogatives and duties pertain to particular persons selected and appointed by vote of the Church without any formal ordination; while others might hold that no man ought to administer the sacraments until he has been ordained by "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery;" and others still might contend that ordination by a bishop, in a regular line of succession from the apostles, is essential to a valid ministry and valid sacraments.

Now, as all these conflicting sentiments are strenuously maintained by persons of different denominations, all professing to be governed by the New Testament, how are these questions to be regulated without

some agreed plan to settle the interpretation of the Scriptures in reference to the points in hand? And if the matter be thus settled, would not that settlement be the adoption of a creed?

If it be said that when any such matter comes before the Church, they will decide it by vote—if this position be taken, then we reply, What if some object to that mode of decision as not in accordance with the New Testament? Then if a vote be proposed to settle *that* dispute, it *too* might be objected to on a similar ground; and so on they might proceed in an endless series of propositions to vote, and objections.

But if the ground be taken that when once it has been decided by vote what the New Testament does teach on a given point, then it is settled, and ought not to be disturbed by farther agitation, and that would be the same as the adoption of a creed or rule of discipline; and it might as well be written in a book, and preserved in permanent form, subject to the examination of all, as to be recorded by the secretary in the Minutes of Church-proceedings.

If it be said that any such decision is only applicable to the case then in hand, and is no rule for the control of future action, then it follows that it is a creed or rule of human device and adoption. It is none the less a creed or rule for the time being, and in application to the case in hand, because it is limited to that particular time and case. All that can be gained by this maneuvering is, that, instead of having one established creed or rule alike applicable to all similar cases, a new creed or rule must be adopted in every new case and by every new vote.

The truth is, there must be agreement as to the order and method of proceeding, or, in other words, as to what are the teachings of the New Testament on the subject, or there can be no order or government whatever. If government exists, it must be administered. If it be administered, it must be administered by some person or persons, according to some rule and in some form; and those administrators must be recognized by the parties governed as the law-interpreting and the law-administering power, according to the New Testament; and whenever, and by whatever form, whether written or oral, that recognition is made, a creed or Church-rule, whether we admit it or not, is adopted. And who cannot see that it is better to have an established rule for all similar cases, than to adopt a new rule, or be compelled to reädopt an old one with every new case?

(3) Again, look at the inconvenience and confusion that must ensue from the no-creed principle, were the attempt made to carry it out in reference to the *ordinances*.

Suppose there were several applicants knocking at the door for baptism and admission for Church-membership. Each has examined the New Testament for himself, but one is satisfied that the ordinance should be administered by *pouring*, another can only be satsified with *sprinkling*, another is sure there is no baptism but *immersion*, another still deems all wrong but himself—he reads, and understands his New Testament to teach that he must be dipped *three times*, first "in the name of the *Father*," then "in the name of the *Son*," and then "in the name of the *Holy Ghost*."

Now, how is this matter to be settled? It is a case of importance, and one *too* that, again and again, has come up in the history of the no-creed party. We reply, it cannot be settled at all, except by a renunciation of the principles of that party. The two great principles of which they boast are: *first*, "no human creed;" *secondly*, "liberty of conscience to all." How beautifully are these hallowed principles exhibited in their dealings with these candidates for baptism and Church-membership! Do they admit them to baptism in the form which alone can satisfy the conscience of the candidate? Far from it. The honest candidate, at the very threshold of this no-creed organization, learns that all he has heard about "*the New Testament alone*," and "*every one his own interpreter*," was but empty parade. According to the history of this matter, there is no baptism allowed to the candidate, unless he will be immersed. The poor applicant will see now that he has been deceived. He finds that *liberty of conscience* means not *his* conscience, but that of *the administrator*—that is, he may read the New Testament, and be governed by *it alone*, till he seeks admission into a no-creed Church; but that very moment he meets a demonstration that the law with this party is not the *New Testament alone* (allowing each to be his own interpreter), but the New Testament as *they, the no-creed party, interpret it.* Here is a faithful picture of the practical workings of the system.

The no-creed party generally adopt the principle that there is *no baptism but immersion;* hence they allow baptism in no other form, nor will they admit to fellowship, as a member in their communion, any unimmersed person. Though he be as pious as John Fletcher, and though John Wesley or John Knox may have baptized him, by pouring or sprinkling, on his profession of faith, still, as he has not been governed by the New Testament as *they*, the no-creed party, see proper *to interpret it*, they say to him: "Stand back, 'we are holier than thou.' Measure yourself on our Procrustean bedstead, and be cut off or stretched till you fit it, and *then*, but not *till then*, you can enter our

inclosure as a member." If this be not the adoption, practically, of a creed or discipline of the most rigid, narrow, exclusive, and intolerant kind, let some one show us the reason why!

(4) Once more, look at the difficulty that must arise in the operation of the no-creed principle in reference to *the observance of the Sabbath and of the Lord's-supper.*

Some may contend for keeping the "Lord's-day," and others may argue that *Saturday* should be kept as the Sabbath. As to the "Lord's-supper," some may advocate its administration on every "Lord's-day;" some may think the New Testament leaves the question unsettled, and that once a month is sufficient; some may contend that it should always be attended to in the evening, after our Lord's example; others may think, as there is no express precept, the morning may be a suitable time for the Supper. A great many such questions may arise, out of which confusion must result; according to the maxim, no rule but the New Testament. But if any agreement or understanding be arrived at that any rule is to be observed beyond what is written in the New Testament, that very moment the principle of the party is given up, and a creed is virtually adopted. It matters not whether *one* rule or *five hundred* be adopted, or whether they be *written* or *unwritten*, the principle is the same, and, in spite of prejudice and of every thing else, the logical consequences must be the same.

(5) Similar difficulties would arise upon the no-creed plan in all matters of *Church-discipline.* This has been sorely felt by the party. Instances are known to have occurred in which one Church has tried and expelled a minister, and a neighboring Church of the same no-creed party has taken up and acted on the same case, and acquitted the accused. Thus the minister stood on the records of one Church as expelled, and on the records of a neighboring Church of the same faith and order as a minister in good standing. Where there is no agreed basis of organization and government, or where (as St. Paul says it is with the heathen) all "are a law unto themselves," such instances of disorder are the inevitable result.

II. Objections considered.

1. Those who oppose written creeds urge it against them that *the adoption of them implies a lack of proper respect for and appreciation of the word of God, and is a substitution of human creeds for the Scriptures.*

In reply to this objection, we remark that it rests entirely on an erroneous basis. We know full well that the no-creed party have ostentatiously assumed to be, *par excellence*, the *New Testament* Church. "The book! the book!" they exclaim, "*we* are governed by 'the book.'

while the *sects* are governed by human creeds, confessions of faith, and disciplines. While the *sects* are constituted on articles and rules of their own devising, *we*, the Christian Church, are constituted on *the New Testament alone.*"

One might infer from the assumptions thus exhibited that these opponents of creeds were the only class of Christians who profess to be governed by the Scriptures, or even to look upon the inspired volume as the great constitutional chart and authoritative standard of the Church, whether for faith or practice. But how different is this from the facts in the case! We know of no Protestant Church, claiming to be Christian, that does not revere the Bible as the only infallible standard in reference to religion.

One article of the Methodist creed declares: "The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." This is but a sample of the profession of all Protestant denominations in reference to their faith in the Scriptures. Is this substituting a human creed for the New Testament? Does this resemble exalting a creed, or human form of discipline, above the Scriptures? Rather, is it not, in the most emphatic language, recognizing God's word as the supreme, the *only*, authoritative, and infallible standard, both in reference to faith and practice?

The correct idea of a creed is, not that it is intended as a substitute for God's book, or something superior, or even equal to it, but merely that it is a brief and plain abstract or summary of the most important doctrines and duties which the denomination setting it forth believe to be plainly taught in the Holy Scriptures. And it is *because* they believe that these doctrines and duties are thus taught in God's word that they have subscribed to them, and promised adherence to the same while they continue members of that denomination, and their belief in those things remains unchanged. Thus any one uniting with that Church is not supposed to subscribe to its creed *because* he has united with the Church, but to have united with the Church *because* he already believes in its creed. Being a member does not cause his belief in the creed, but his belief in the creed causes him to become a member.

He who reads the Bible, and thinks for himself, must have his belief in reference to the fundamental doctrines and important duties of Christianity. If he keeps this belief to himself, it is his *mental* creed; if he tells it to others, it is his *spoken* creed; if he writes it in a book, it is his *written* creed. Does any suppose that because John Knox, John

Wesley, Andrew Fuller, Alexander Campbell, and others, have each and all of them derived a creed, as best as they could, from God's inspired book, and published it to the world, that in that publication they have shown any disrespect to the Scriptures? or that they intended to substitute their printed belief for the Scriptures? or that they considered the Bible an imperfect standard of faith, and had set forth a better? No one can dream a conclusion so silly. Why, then, should it be thought that because a denomination or collection of Christians have done the very same thing — published in a book called their Creed what they honestly believe the Bible to teach—they should be charged with the sin of having attempted to substitute a code of their own devising for the Scriptures of infallible truth? In all the vast range of inconsequent reasoning, absurd conclusions, and groundless allegations, it would be difficult to find any thing to excel this attempt to fasten upon all written creeds the sin of aiming to be a substitute for the inspired Scriptures.

Indeed, it requires but little reflection to perceive that the objection here urged against written creeds would apply with equal force against all preaching and the publication of all religious books. Why, it might just as well be asked, instead of all this preaching, and writing, and printing, do we not simply have the Scriptures read to the congregations, and no religious book but the Bible printed? for to preach on religion, except in Bible phrase, is attempting to substitute for the Scriptures something of our own. Who does not see the absurdity to which the position leads?

2. But it is argued that the adoption of a creed is useless, unless it expresses Bible truth in *a better form* than the inspired language has expressed it; and to presume that the creed can do this is to assume that *the creed-makers are wiser than inspiration.*

One of the main designs of a written creed is to furnish all concerned with a brief outline of the belief of the denominations as to the teachings of the Bible. It is a fact which none will dispute that, in reference to the teachings of the Scriptures on many important subjects, there is great diversity of sentiment among professed Christians; hence it follows that for a denomination simply to announce to the world that they believe the Bible, would be, as to the point in hand, perfectly evasive and unsatisfactory. It would prove that they were neither atheists nor deists, but would scarcely do more. Whether they are Antinomians, Calvinists, Arminians, Pelagians, Socinians, Universalists, German Rationalists, or what, among all the conflicting beliefs of those who profess to believe the Bible, may be their distinctive tenets, no one could

tell. If all believers in the Bible explained it alike, the case would be different; but while the multitudinous classes of errorists all claim to take their faith from the Bible, something tangible, brief, clear, and unambiguous, such as a creed may supply, is indispensable to show to the world what the denomination understand the Bible to teach.

This same no-creed party are just as ready as others to explain, in private conversation or public sermons, all the peculiar angles of their distinctive belief. Why not print it in a book, and call it their creed? Or if the term *creed* is so offensive, then call it their *sense* of what the Scriptures teach? If merely explaining our belief in reference to what the Scriptures teach does not imply that we consider ourselves wiser than inspiration, neither should printing that explanation in a book, and calling it a creed, be so construed.

Again, a *written* creed furnishes a much fairer ordeal for comparing our doctrines with Scripture, and thus testing their correctness, than can be had if we decline committing our views to writing. If we doubt the correctness of our faith, and fear it will not bear rigid criticism, and yet wish to keep it in countenance and out of the crucible as much as possible, it may be a successful policy to acknowledge no written creed. Words merely *spoken* are easily forgotten, liable to be misunderstood or misrepresented, and are not so readily brought to a strict and critical analysis; but when recorded in a book, they may be closely scanned and criticised, and, if erroneous or absurd, their imperfections may be readily detected and exposed.

Again, creeds may be necessary and useful, without implying that those who make them consider them superior to the Scriptures. The Bible is a very comprehensive book, embracing an extensive range on a great variety of subjects. It embodies a fund of instruction on themes the most important and sublime, and in some instances profoundly mysterious. That portions of its contents are "hard to be understood" is no disparagement, but rather adds dignity and grandeur to that inimitable volume. Of course it must be expected that men will differ in opinion in reference to the interpretation of the Scriptures.

But there is much less diversity of sentiment in reference to the meaning of a creed. For illustration, the no-creed party have very generally adopted an article (whether *oral* or *written* is not material so far as principle is concerned) declaring, "There is no baptism but immersion." Now, it is clear there can be no controversy as to the meaning of this article; but it is equally certain that there is controversy in reference to what the Scriptures teach on the subject. But does it therefore follow that the framers of that article have excelled the

inspired writers? The opponents of creeds surely will not answer this question in the affirmative, but, unless they do, they relinquish the principle of the objection under consideration.

Again, the Bible only gives an outline of Church affairs, leaving much of the detail to be carried out by the Churches, as expediency and circumstances may dictate. These details of organization and government, though in themselves of comparatively minor importance, and though the particular form in which they are adopted is of small consequence, yet such is their nature that attention to them, in some shape, is indispensable to Church order and decorum. For illustration, the Bible enjoins administration of Church discipline and ordinances, but does not specify the precise form in which officers are to be selected for this work; if by the whole Church, whether by *viva voce* vote, by the lifting up of hands, or by ballot, is not declared; nor does the Bible determine the order of administering the Lord's-supper, whether it shall be administered once a month, every week, or every day; nor is the precise order specified in which the public worship is to be conducted, whether reading the Scriptures, singing, prayer, and preaching, are all to be included as parts of the service, and, if so, in what order they are to succeed each other; these, and numerous other details, though not specifically settled in Scripture, are all necessary to be understood and agreed upon in a well ordered Church. But whether these details be settled by a mere verbal understanding preserved in the memory, or by vote of a Church-meeting recorded by a secretary, or by a record printed in a book and called a creed, *these* are mere circumstances which cannot affect the principle involved. Whatever be the form which the proceeding may assume, it proves that there are rules and regulations which Churches may, and *must*, adopt beyond what is written in the New Testament, without claiming a wisdom superior to that of the inspired apostles; and of course the objection is seen to be untenable and fallacious.

Several other objections have been made against creeds, but they are all easily shown to be futile.

3. Creeds are opposed on the ground that there is *no express Bible command authorizing them.* If it be wrong to make, or to adopt, a creed because there is no express Bible command for it, then it is wrong to write and publish a religious book. The one is as destitute of an express command as the other.

If it be said that the propriety of publishing religious books is established by all such general precepts as require us to do all the good we can—if the shift be made to this position, then the objection to creeds

founded on the absence of any express command is relinquished; for if the right to publish a book can rest on *inferential* Bible basis, so may the authority for creeds.

4. Creeds are opposed on the ground that they are productive of *heresies* and *schisms*.

This has often been asserted, but never has been and never can be proved. That creeds should necessarily be productive of heresy or schism, is a position not only unsustained by evidence, but in itself unphilosophical. It confounds the distinction between cause and effect, or rather puts the one for the other. Creeds do not produce diversity of sentiment, but diversity of sentiment produces creeds. If all were agreed *what* the Scriptures teach, there would be no necessity for human creeds; they could not originate. Heresies in the Church arose first, and creeds were framed and adopted to detect, expose, and check those heresies; and that they have been efficient instruments in the accomplishment of this work, the history of the Church has clearly evinced.

Creeds were first called symbols, because they were viewed as signs, marks, or notes, of profession at baptism. The oldest of these is styled "The Apostles' Creed," because it was supposed to have originated at, or near, the apostles' day, if not to be in part derived from them. This noble symbol of Christian faith, originating at so early a date, and sounding on through all succeeding ages from the lips of the millions of God's people, has done more for the prevention and suppression of heresy and schism, and for the promotion of Christian unity and concord, than all that has ever been uttered and written against creeds. Indeed, the legitimate tendency of creeds is directly the reverse of what the objection supposes.

The Nicene Creed, in the fourth century, was framed for the suppression of the Arian heresy. About the close of the same century an addition was made to the creed, condemning the heresy of Macedonius, and affirming the divinity of the Holy Ghost; and at the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, in the middle of the fifth century, by other additions to the creed, the heresies of Nestorius and Eutychius were condemned. At Nice, the creed was made to assert the proper divinity of Christ; at Constantinople, that of the Holy Ghost; at Ephesus, that the divine and the human natures in Christ are united in *one* person; and at Chalcedon, that both natures remain *distinct*, and that the humanity is not lost or absorbed in the divinity.

The creeds, thus settled at so early a day, have exerted a powerful influence in all subsequent ages in preserving the great body of the

Church from schism and from heresy in relation to those fundamental doctrines.

The great truth is, that those who object to creeds cannot sustain their objections without contradicting their own positions, and condemning their own practices. Whether they admit it or not, they, in effect and reality, have adopted a human creed. That they are not governed by *the New Testament, or by the Bible alone*, may easily be demonstrated. True, they acknowledge no creed but the Bible; but those who subscribe to creeds make the same profession. Wherein, then, is the difference? Let us scan this question closely. Where, we ask, is the real, the practical difference?

The creed-party say they are governed by *the Bible alone*, but honestly admit that they mean *the Bible as they understand its teachings;* and they adopt a creed as an exhibit, so far as it goes, of *what they understand the Bible to teach.* Here all is plain and open, as it should be; no one is deceived, deluded, or mystified; all may read, examine, understand, and test their positions.

But how is it with the no-creed party? They *too* say they are governed by *the Bible alone.* They admit no qualification. "The Bible alone," say they, "and not the Bible *as interpreted by any man or set of men.*" But when we come to view the application and practical workings of this no-creed theory, as has been shown, its standard is not *the Bible alone*, allowing each one to interpret the book for himself, but the Bible as *they, the no-creed party, have agreed or may agree to interpret it.*

Now, we demand, if this be the true statement of the facts in the case, which none can deny, how is it possible to reconcile the theory with the practice of the no-creed party? Their theory is this—we are governed by *the Bible alone;* their practice is this—we are governed by the Bible *as we interpret it.* Now, there is but one possible way of reconciling these two propositions; and that is, to admit that the no-creed party are endued with *infallibility* as Bible interpreters. If there be one single point in which they interpret the Bible incorrectly, and they are governed by that interpretation (which they of course will be), then in that case *they are not governed by the Bible alone.* The conclusion therefore is inevitable, that they must either claim the infallibility assumed by the Pope, or relinquish their cherished boast that they are governed by the Bible alone in any higher sense than those who subscribe to written creeds.

There is an imposing aspect and a fragrance of liberality about the phrase, "The Bible, and the Bible alone;" but let us not be ensnared

by illusive charms, let us look at the reality of things; the substance, and not the shadow, can alone satisfy the thinking mind.

What, we ask, is a law without an expounding and executive power? Mere law in the abstract is as powerless for government, whether of Church or state, as a web of gossamer. The constitution and laws of our country are only efficacious as expounded by the courts and enforced by the executive; just so, the Scriptures can only be available for the government of the Church as interpreted and administered by some recognized power. To aver that we are governed by the New Testament, or by the Bible, amounts to nothing, unless we can determine what are the teachings of that book. The creed defines the agreed sense of those teachings, and recognizes the proper officers for administering the law and the method of proceeding therein.

Those who acknowledge no creed but the Bible must, in the nature of things, adopt some method of settling the meaning of Scripture, and of carrying out the law, otherwise they can have no government whatever. This they unquestionably have done; and disguise it as they may, they are governed, not by "the Bible alone," but by *their interpretation of the Bible*, and this interpretation, however it may be arrived at, and settled, or agreed to, is, *de facto*, their creed. Hence the conclusion of the whole matter is, that the opposition to written creeds either starts upon an erroneous basis, assuming that creeds are intended to coerce obedience upon those who have not voluntarily adopted them, and thus interfere with liberty of conscience, or it involves the no-creed party in the inconsistency of warring against creeds by the use of arguments fatal to their own position and contradictory to their own practice.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER X.

Question 1. Whence has the prejudice against written creeds generally originated?

2. How is this prejudice shown to be unwarranted?

3. What is the first argument for the propriety and utility of creeds?

4. How is it shown that creeds do not infringe upon the liberty of conscience?

5. What is the second argument for creeds?

6. Why is a creed necessary for the orderly conducting of public worship?

7. Why is it necessary in reference to the regular preaching of the word of God?

8. Why is it necessary in reference to the administration of the ordinances?

9. Why is it necessary in reference to the Sabbath and the Lord's-supper?

10. Why, in reference to Church-discipline?

11. What is the first objection to creeds, and how is it answered?

12. The second, and how is it answered?

13. The third, and how is it answered?

14. How is it shown that those who object to creeds, in endeavoring to sustain those objections, involve themselves in self-contradiction?

15. What is stated as the conclusion of the whole matter?

PART IV.—THE INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY

BOOK II.—THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS.

CHAPTER XI.

THE NUMBER AND NATURE OF THE SACRAMENTS.

CHRISTIANITY, when compared with the Mosaic institution by which it was preceded, is emphatically a *spiritual* dispensation. Its external religious services are simple, and its rites and ceremonies are neither numerous nor burdensome. It is universally admitted by Protestants that the sacramental ordinances of the Christian Church are but two—Baptism, and the Lord's-supper.

The Roman Catholics, who have deluged the Church with so many superstitious rites and ceremonies, have added to the two sacramental ordinances of the New Testament, five others—Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction; but as none of these are presented in Scripture as *sacraments*, and as they are destitute in their nature of the essential characteristics of such ordinances, presenting no visible *sign* or *seal* of covenant relation or spiritual grace, we pass them without farther notice.

The word *μυστήριον* "means, in the New Testament, either *secret*—something unknown till revealed—or the spiritual import of an emblem or type." The word in Latin is *sacramentum*, which means a solemn religious ceremony, or oath.

There are three leading views as to the import of the Christian sacraments.

1. The Roman Catholics teach that the sacraments contain the grace they signify, and that this grace is communicated to the recipient, provided it be not prevented by a mortal sin on the part of the individual receiving it, and provided, also, that the priests administering "have an intention of doing what the Church doeth, and doth intend to do." It

will be perceived that this theory gives to the sacraments a divine and saving efficacy, independent of faith, or any good disposition, or moral qualification whatever (a mortal sin excepted), on the part of the recipient. A doctrine so absurd as this can have no Scripture for its support, and, of course, must ground its claims wholly upon the traditions of a superstitious Church.

2. The second view of the subject is that maintained by Socinians, and more or less followed by Arians, Unitarians, Universalists, and even too much favored by some Protestants having higher claims to orthodoxy. This theory does not allow any *essential* difference between a sacrament and any other religious rite or ceremony; the only peculiarity of a sacrament, according to this scheme, being its emblematic character, representing spiritual grace by visible signs, and being a memorial of past events. Hence, according to this theory, a sacrament is merely a help to the exerise of faith and pious meditation, and a means of promoting the graces of Christian character.

3. The third view is that entertained by the great body of orthodox Protestants. While it admits and contends for all that the second theory implies, it maintains that a Christian sacrament has yet a deeper and more comprehensive import. The true meaning of a sacrament is well expressed in our sixteenth Article of Religion, thus:

"Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him."

This substantially agrees with the creeds of orthodox Protestants generally Accordingly it appears that Christian sacraments are—

1. *Ordinances of Christ.* They are institutions of his own express appointment. At the close of the Passover he ordained the "Supper," administering to the "twelve" the "bread" and the "wine," saying, "This do in remembrance of me." In the great commission he instituted the Christian Baptism, saying, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, *baptizing* them," etc.

2. *They are signs.* They are visible emblems of internal spiritual grace. The *baptismal water* points us to the corruption and depravity of our nature, which needs cleansing, and to the fountain of grace by which we may be washed and purified. The *bread* and the *wine* direct our faith to the atonement of Christ—to his broken body and shed blood—exhibiting his redeeming mercy and love in suffering for sinners, that he might bring them to God.

3. *They are seals.* As circumcision was the divinely-appointed *seal* of the covenant of redemption as given to Abraham, so "Baptism" and the "Supper" are *seals* under the gospel of the same covenant. By giving us these *seals*, God confirms unto us visibly the promise of his saving mercy. By receiving them, we enter upon the most solemn obligations of fidelity and obedience to God. Thus these sacraments, while we attach to them no superstitious idea of efficacy as a *charm*, or of directly imparting a spiritual benefit through a physical agency, yet are they a most influential means of grace. They tend to increase and confirm our faith, to quicken our spiritual powers, to encourage our hopes, and to renew and strengthen our obligations to love and to serve God.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XI.

QUESTION 1. What are the Christian sacraments as enumerated by the Roman Catholics?

2. Which of these are destitute of Bible authority?

3. What are the Christian sacraments as set forth in Scripture?

4. What is the Greek word for sacrament, and what is its import?

5. What is the Roman Catholic view as to the nature and efficacy of sacraments?

6. What is the view of Socinians, Arians, Universalists, etc.?

7. What is the orthodox view on the subject?

CHAPTER XII.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM — ITS NATURE, OBLIGATION, DESIGN, AND EFFICACY.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM is a subject upon which, for centuries past, there has, perhaps, been a greater amount of polemic strife than upon any other theological question. Upon this arena master combatants oft and again have fiercely met, and plied their utmost skill and strength, and left the field with the question no nearer being settled than when they began. Judging from the past, we may reasonably despair of perfect harmony of sentiment in the Church on this trite and much-mooted theme till the second coming of Christ. In the present stage of this controversy we can scarcely hope to present any thing substantially *new;* nor shall we aim at any thing farther than a clear and condensed view of the leading and most important arguments necessary to sustain what we consider the correct and scriptural statement of the doctrine.

I. The first question in connection with this theme naturally presenting itself for our consideration is this: What is the NATURE of *Christian baptism*?

As this is admitted to be what is termed a *positive* institute, it is clear that we are dependent entirely upon the divine record for our information.

The term *baptism* is from the Greek *βαπτίζω*, which is a derivative of *βάπτω*. This word, according to the lexicographers, means "*to dip, to plunge into water, to wash, to dye,*" etc. It is, however, very clear that the etymology of the word can furnish us no information as to the *nature* or *design* of the ordinance. Upon *this* point, whatever we may conclude as to the *mode* and *subjects* of baptism, no light can be shed by the etymological discussion; and we may also add that, in the question now before us, we have nothing whatever to do with the *mode* or *subjects* of baptism. Those matters must be held in abeyance for after consideration.

As to the *nature* and *design* of baptism, we must rely solely on the history of the subject and the statements concerning it, as recorded in the Bible. It is admitted that our Saviour ingrafted the sacrament of

the "Lord's-supper" on the Jewish Passover; and it may be affirmed that "Baptism," the other Christian sacrament, had its origin in a similar way—being substituted for "circumcision." The institution of Christian baptism unquestionably was set up and established in the great commission given to the apostles by the Saviour after his resurrection: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Here we date the divine origin of baptism as a standing, obligatory, and perpetual ordinance of the Christian Church. Here is the great charter from which the Christian ministry in all ages derive their divine authority for the administration of this ordinance.

But notwithstanding this ordinance, as a permanent Christian institute, was here established, it is clear that baptism did not then for the first time take its existence in the Church. Though our Saviour here gave it a new, specific designation, it was no new institution hitherto unheard of: he does not refer to it as such, but speaks of it as something with which the disciples were already acquainted. Under the direction of our Lord, they had already been practicing a baptism probably but little different from that of John, with which the whole Jewish nation were familiar.

1. That *baptism was practiced among the Jews long before the time of John*, and probably *from the commencement of the Mosaic economy, we have good evidence for believing.*

St. Paul speaks of "divers washings" (*βαπτισμοῖς*, baptisms) as existing among the Jews (Heb. ix. 10). And Maimonides testifies that "in all ages, when a heathen was willing to enter into the covenant of Israel, and gather himself under the wings of the majesty of God, and take upon himself the yoke of the law, he must be first circumcised, and secondly, *baptized*, and thirdly, bring a sacrifice; or, if the party were a woman, then she must be first *baptized*, and secondly, bring a sacrifice." He adds: "At this present time, when (the temple being destroyed) there is no sacrificing, a stranger must be first circumcised, and secondly, *baptized.*"

From Epictetus we have the following testimony (he is blaming those who assume the profession of philosophy without acting up to it): "Why do you call yourself a Stoic? Why do you deceive the multitude? Why do you pretend to be a Greek when you are a Jew, a Syrian, an Egyptian? And when you see any one wavering, we are wont to say, This is not a Jew, but acts one; but when he assumes the

sentiments of one who has been *baptized* and *circumcised*, then he both really is and is called a Jew. Thus we, falsifying our profession, are Jews in name, but in reality something else."

This ancient Jewish baptism of proselytes, concerning the existence of which there can be no rational doubt, seems to have been an act of *initiation*, or of transfer from paganism to Judaism. As the Jew, when from any cause he had become ceremonially unclean, was excommunicated or cut off from the privileges of the Church till he had performed the washings, or *baptisms*, prescribed by the law, so the Gentile, on being publicly admitted into the Church, was also required to submit to a washing, or baptism, to signify his being purified from the pollutions of his former religion. All we can learn, therefore, as to the nature and design of this proselyte baptism is, that it was a public act of *initiation*, signifying *purification*. As to the various "washings," or baptisms, among the Jews themselves, they all denoted that ceremonial purification from defilement which the law described.

2. The "*baptism of John*" next demands a brief notice. This baptism, till recently, has been generally held by immersionists as identical with, or as *really* the commencement of, the Christian baptism; but this preposterous view seems to be now pretty generally abandoned by the more intelligent Baptists, and especially has it been renounced by Alexander Campbell, one of the most learned immersionists of the age. Yet as this absurd notion is still firmly grounded in the prejudice of many, it merits some attention.

That "John's baptism" was not the *Christian* baptism is manifest from several considerations.

(1) The distinctive *appellation* given it in Scripture shows that it was not the Christian baptism. It is called "*John's baptism.*" How absurd would it be to speak of "Peter's baptism," "Paul's baptism," or "Apollos's baptism!" Yet if "John's baptism" were identical with the Christian baptism, such expressions would be no more absurd than to speak of "John's baptism."

(2) The difference in the *formula* used in the Christian baptism and that of John clearly evinces that the two baptisms were not identical. The formula of the Christian baptism runs thus: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" or, as it is sometimes more briefly expressed, "In the name of the Lord Jesus." John evidently did not, nor *could* he, use language of any such import.

(3) The character of John's *dispensation* renders it impossible that his baptism could have been the same as the Christian. John was the forerunner of Christ, and his dispensation was but *preparatory* to that

of the gospel. This appears from the words of John himself. In speaking of Christ he says: "He must increase, but I must decrease"—that is, my dispensation must quickly pass away, like unto "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," that quickly dies upon the ear, but his "kingdom" shall increase more and more, "for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." Again, Jesus says: "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." The "kingdom of heaven" here evidently means the gospel Church, and he that is *least* in that Church can only be said to be greater than John, because of the fact that he lives in the enjoyment of the superior blessings of the gospel dispensation, while the dispensation of John was *inferior* and only *preparatory*.

(4) That "John's baptism" could not be the *Christian* baptism, is evident from the fact that *it had passed away before Christianity was introduced*. John began to preach and baptize six months before our Saviour entered upon his public ministry. Hence, if John's was the Christian baptism, it would follow that this initiatory rite was not instituted by Christ himself, but by his forerunner, at least six months previous to the existence of Christianity. Into what absurdities does error impel her votaries!

(5) The *condition* and *requirements* of "John's baptism" are so different from those of the Christian baptism, that the two could not have been identical. John simply demanded of the people *repentance*, saying: "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Matt. iii. 8); or, as St. Paul expresses it, "John verily baptized with the baptism of *repentance*, saying unto the people that they should *believe on him which should come after him*." But in the Christian baptism there is not only required *repentance*, but also faith—not in a *Messiah to come*, but in a Saviour who has already come, and suffered, and died for our sins, and risen again for our justification; for St. Paul says: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?" And when the eunuch demanded baptism, the reply of Philip was: "If thou *believest* with all thy heart, thou mayest." Here we see that in Christian baptism there is required not only faith in Christ as a manifested Saviour, but a faith realizing and introducing the subject of it into the enjoyment of the full benefits of his sacrificial death in the remission of sin and the renewing of the soul by the influence of the Holy Spirit. John did not even baptize in the name of Christ. How, then, could his be the Christian baptism?

(6) Again, the example of the apostles in *rebaptizing John's disciples*

when they were converted to Christianity, is the most direct proof that the two baptisms were not the same. (See Acts xix. 1–5.) We know that an effort has been made by some who hold to "John's baptism" as a Christian institute, to construe this passage in such manner that it shall not teach the rebaptism of John's disciples; but we consider the passage so plain, that the effort to escape its force by any other than the obvious construction that records the *rebaptism of John's disciples*, is too manifestly strained to be dictated by any thing but prejudice; therefore we deem it unworthy of a reply.

Although we conclude, for the reasons given, that the baptism of John was not identical with the permanent Christian baptism instituted by Christ, yet it was divinely sanctioned, and served the purpose for which it was intended. It bore the same relation to the Christian baptism that John's ministry did to that of the apostles when they went forth in the discharge of their great commission after having been "endued with power from on high." As to its *nature* and *design*, all we can learn is, that it served as a *badge of profession*, or as an *initiatory rite* into John's dispensation, implying that its recipient made a public confession of his sins, and a profession of repentance, and of faith in a Messiah soon to appear. With John's disciples, baptism was an application of water, used as an emblem of the *moral purification* preparatory for that reception of the Messiah which repentance implied, and a *profession of faith* in the doctrines of John's dispensation.

The baptism which Christ commanded his disciples to perform during his personal ministry, and previous to his crucifixion, however it may have differed in character from that of John's, was not the same baptism which was afterward appointed under the perfected gospel system, and which was to be perpetuated "alway, even unto the end of the world." The baptism connected with Christ's personal ministry bore the same relation to the *Christian* baptism that his personal teachings, while he was (as Paul declares, Rom. xv. 8) "a minister of the circumcision," bore to the gospel in its complete development after the Pentecostal baptism had been conferred. Christ's personal ministry, previous to Pentecost, and also that of his disciples, were only *preparatory* to the full development of the gospel kingdom. The mission was, then, not to the Gentiles, but to the Jews. Jesus "came unto his own;" that is, the Jews. And he said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. xv. 24.) The mission of the apostles was, then, "not into the way of the Gentiles," or "into any city of the Samaritans," but "unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

This baptism was, nevertheless, a *badge of profession;* for it designated

its subjects as "disciples" of Jesus, and believers in him as a "teacher come from God." It differed from the *Christian* baptism, first, because it was not "*in the name* of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" secondly, because it did not recognize in its profession of faith a crucified and risen Messiah. It was no more identical with the Christian baptism instituted in the great apostolic commission, than was that of John. A person baptized with the faith required, either in John's baptism or that of Christ's apostles, previous to the grand commission given after Christ's resurrection, could not be thereby admitted into communion in any genuine Christian Church in the world. Such a baptism and such a faith would rather indicate a Jew than a Christian.

II. We now proceed to examine the OBLIGATION OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM in the proper sense of that term.

Christian baptism is an ordinance of *universal* and *perpetual obligation.*

By this we mean that it is the duty of all who would become Christians to be baptized, and that this obligation was not a temporary requirement, but is to be perpetuated in the Church "alway, even unto the end of the world."

We know of no denomination, "professing and calling themselves Christians," who have denied the perpetuity of this ordinance in the Christian Church, except the Quakers. It is, however, admitted that some among the Socinians, Unitarians, and other classes of sectaries of loose principles and heterodox creed, have lightly esteemed water baptism, contemplating it as possessing no *sacramental* character, but being mainly an external mark of distinction between Pagans and Christians; useful at the introduction of the gospel in Pagan countries, but not necessary as a perpetual ordinance of the Church. It has been well said that "extremes beget extremes;" and, perhaps, the early tendency in the Church to magnify the importance of external rites, and attach a superstitious and unscriptural efficacy to mere forms and ceremonies, has tended to drive some to the opposite extreme of esteeming them too lightly. Indeed, the error, in this respect, of the Mystics, Quakers, Socinians, and all others who have repudiated or undervalued water baptism or other external rites, is but an outbirth from the opposite and more dangerous theories concerning *sacramental salvation, water regeneration,* etc.

That water baptism is an institution of perpetual obligation in the Church, is a clear deduction from the language of the great apostolic commission: "Go ye therefore, and teach *all nations, baptizing them* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; *teach-*

ing them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you *alway, even unto the end of the world.*" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) Or as it is recorded by St. Mark: "Go ye into *all the world,* and preach the gospel *to every creature.* He that believeth and *is baptized* shall be saved." (Mark xvi. 15, 16.)

From the terms of this commission it is settled beyond dispute—1. That it is to extend *universally over the world*—"all nations"—"all the world"—"every creature." This language admits of no restriction to the *commencement* of the dispensation, or to the *introduction* of the gospel in a Pagan country. 2. The *perpetuity* of the institution of baptism is here unquestionably established: "Alway, even unto the end of the world." This phrase, as well as the language recorded by St. Mark—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"—can only be rationally interpreted as teaching the *perpetuity* of the commission, and the performance of water baptism as one of its *abiding* functions. Other scriptures, to the same effect, might be quoted; but it is sufficient to add that in all the Bible, whether we refer to those predictions of the prophets concerning the gospel dispensation in which water baptism is evidently referred to, or to the teachings of Christ, or to the writings and administration of his inspired apostles, there is not the slightest intimation that this ordinance was ever to be discontinued. To set aside the obligation of water baptism (though the error might be less pernicious), would be equally as destitute of authority from Scripture, as to discard the requirement of repentance or of faith.

It may be proper, however, before we dismiss this point, to inquire upon what ground the attempt has been made to disprove the perpetuity of this ordinance.

In addition to mere reasoning from general principles, based upon the admitted fact of the *spirituality* of the gospel dispensation, as contrasted with the *ceremonial* character of that of Moses, express Scripture authority has been invoked to disprove the perpetual obligation of water baptism.

On this subject some have founded an argument on the words of John: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." Here John shows *his* inferiority to the *Messiah,* from the fact that he (John) baptized *only* "with water," but Christ would "baptize with *the Holy Ghost.*" But how gratuitous and preposterous is it to infer that because the Saviour baptized "with the Holy Ghost," therefore he could not authorize baptism "with water" But how monstrous must this inference appear, when it is remembered that it so flatly contradicts the plain history of the facts! for on the

very day of Pentecost, when the baptism of the Holy Ghost was first poured out, "three thousand" were also baptized with water. And again, when, under the preaching of Peter, the *baptism of the Holy Ghost* fell on the first Gentile converts in the house of Cornelius, so far from *this* baptism superseding that of *water*, the apostle infers the *propriety* of the one from the *fact* of the other. His language is, "Can any man forbid *water*, that these should not be baptized, which have received the *Holy Ghost* as well as we?" Indeed, we may say that to discard water baptism as a mere temporary appendage, and not a permanent institution of the gospe., is not to be guided by the New Testament, but to proceed in direct opposition to its history. Hence, we conclude that while the gospel shall continue to be preached in the world, and the organization of the Christian Church shall be preserved, water baptism, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," will still be required.

III. We have already contemplated baptism, as also the other sacrament—the Lord's-supper—as a *sign* and *seal* of "internal spiritual grace." We now inquire more particularly concerning the *design* and *efficacy* of baptism.

1. The first theory upon this subject which we shall notice, is that of the Roman Catholics. They attribute to this sacrament a *saving efficacy*—teaching that, in some mysterious way, there is directly imparted through this ordinance, when properly administered, spiritual grace, in such sense, that whatever may be the character of the subject (unless he be guilty of some mortal sin), his moral nature is at once regenerated and sanctified; thus attributing to the element of water the efficacy pertaining alone to the blood of Christ, and to the agency of the priest the work of regeneration and sanctification, which can only be effected by the agency of the Holy Spirit.

2. Another theory, somewhat different from the view just presented, though closely allied to it, has been sanctioned by a class of High-church Episcopalians, and very zealously advocated by Alexander Campbell and his followers. This theory, while it rejects the notion that there is any saving efficacy in the sacrament of baptism itself, or any spiritual grace directly imparted through this application of water, independent of the character or disposition of the subject, yet maintains that baptism, properly administered and received, secures the grace of regeneration, and is the means and pledge of the remission of sins.

The abettors of this theory are, however, not agreed among themselves as to the import of regeneration. While some of them understand the term as implying, according to its commonly received import, a *change*

of heart, or a renewal of the moral nature, others construe it as meaning only a *change of state;* yet they harmonize in the position that the remission of sins is promised only through baptism, and, consequently, that without baptism an evidence of forgiveness cannot be obtained. Alexander Campbell has expressed his peculiar theory upon this subject in the following language: "We have the most explicit proof that God forgives sins for the name's sake of his Son, or when the name of Jesus Christ is named upon us in immersion; that in and by the act of immersion, so soon as our bodies are put under water, at that very instant our former or 'old sins' are all washed away, provided only that we are true believers."

It is apparent, from the account just given of the views of Roman Catholics, High-church Episcopalians, and of Alexander Campbell, as to the connection of baptism with regeneration and the remission of sins, that there are several shades of difference in sentiment among them. Yet, so closely are they allied, that a refutation of the position of Mr. Campbell, as just presented in his own language, will comprise a refutation of all the schemes to which we have referred. Therefore, we proceed directly to examine that position.

The position is substantially this: that the remission of sins is imparted only through baptism.

This, which is the theory of Mr. Campbell, we consider but little better than the doctrine of the High-church Episcopalians or of the Roman Catholics. These schemes, we are satisfied, are radically erroneous, substituting, in effect, the element of water and the physical agency of man for the blood of Christ and the divine agency of the Holy Spirit.

Now, if we can show that there is some other condition, separate and distinct from baptism, with which the remission of sins is inseparably connected, and that remission is not thus inseparably connected with baptism, it will follow, of course, that the position we oppose cannot be true.

We appeal, then, "to the law and to the testimony." "He that *believeth* on him *is not condemned.*" (John iii. 18.) "He that *believeth* on the Son *hath everlasting life.*" (John iii. 36.) "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that *believeth* on me *hath everlasting life.*" (John iii. 47.) "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified *by faith* without the deeds of the law." (Rom. iii. 28.) "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever *believeth* in him *shall receive remission of sins.*" (Acts x. 43.)

A large portion of Scripture, to the same effect, might be adduced; but to add more is needless. If the above passages do not decide the

point that *faith*, and not *baptism*, is the condition on which the "remission of sins" turns, no language could be framed to prove the position. Here we are taught that every *believer* is freed from "condemnation"—"hath everlasting life"—"is justified"—and "shall receive remission of sins." Now, we affirm that no man *can* possess all these things and his sins *not* be remitted. Can a man be "not condemned," "have everlasting life," and be "justified," and his sins not be remitted? The supposition is utterly inadmissible. Can he have *faith* without baptism? Surely he can. Why not? Then it follows that his sins may be remitted without baptism. Indeed, Mr. Campbell's system not only contradicts the Bible, but fights against itself. Mr. Campbell teaches that a man must have *faith* before he can properly receive baptism; but if he has *faith*, if the Bible be true, "his sins *are* remitted;" and Mr. Campbell correctly tells us that if he has not *faith*, his sins will not be remitted in baptism. Hence it follows that if all who believe (as the Bible teaches) have already received "remission of sins," and if (as Mr. Campbell teaches) they can only receive the "remission of sins" by first believing and then being baptized, it amounts to this: a man must *first* have "his sins remitted" *before* they *can* be remitted—that is, a thing must *be* before it *can be*. The truth is, the theory that "remission of sins" is inseparably connected with baptism flatly contradicts the Bible. The Bible connects remission inseparably with *faith*. Admit the truth of this position (which we cannot deny without flatly contradicting many plain scriptures, as we have shown), then we cannot escape the conclusion, according to Mr. Campbell, that we must *first have* remission before we *can have it*, which is a contradiction.

We take the first text which we quoted above—"*He that believeth on him is not condemned*"—and if there were no other scripture bearing on the subject, this alone contains a proof of the position for which we here contend, that can never be shaken (unless we flatly contradict the Saviour) by all the skill, ingenuity, and sophistry in the world. "He that believeth on him is not condemned." Now, if this text means any thing, it means this: that all who believe on Christ are, *that instant—the very moment they first believe on Christ*—free from *condemnation;* and if *free from condemnation*, then they are *pardoned*, *forgiven*, their *sins are remitted*, they are *justified*, they are *the children of God*, they "shall not come into *condemnation*, but are passed from *death* unto *life*." Can language be plainer, or proof clearer or more direct? If it be, then, a settled Bible maxim that the "remission of sins" is inseparably connected with *faith*, can it, at the same time, be inseparably connected with *baptism?* It is utterly impossible, unless we say that *faith*

also is inseparably connected with baptism. We arrive again at the same conclusion—*faith* gives *remission;* but if faith must *first exist* in order to proper baptism, then baptism cannot give remission; for you cannot give a man what he already possesses.

Seeing, then, that the Scriptures so explicitly and so abundantly teach that the "remission of sins" is inseparably connected with *faith*, we now examine those texts which, it is alleged, teach that "remission of sins" is inseparably connected with *baptism*. Of one thing we may be well assured: the Scriptures do not contradict themselves. If, therefore, it can be established from the Scriptures that "remission of sins" is inseparably connected with baptism, then it will necessarily follow that faith is inseparably connected with baptism; for "things equal to the same are equal to one another."

The main reliance of the advocates of the system of baptismal regeneration and remission is on the words of Peter in his sermon at Pentecost: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts ii. 38.) Now, the question is, does this text necessarily prove the inseparable connection of the remission of sins with baptism? We contend that it does not. In the phrase, "for the remission of sins," great stress has been laid on the meaning of the Greek preposition, εἰς, which, it is contended, should have been translated "*in order to*," instead of "*for*." We attach no importance whatever to the controversy about the translation. The same preposition, as may be shown from numerous examples in the New Testament, may be translated in either way. It often means "in order to," and it often means "in reference to," or "on account of;" and the context must determine the proper sense. But the rendering of the preposition in this instance can have no effect upon the question before us. The question is this: Is it clearly taught that baptism is here presented as the essential and inseparable condition of remission? Under the sermon of Peter the wicked Jews were "pricked in their heart;" that is, they were *convicted*, and cried out: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They seem to have been in a similar condition to that of the jailer when he exclaimed, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" In this condition were they when "Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized," etc. Now, as it is evident from this language that they had not yet evangelically *repented*, is it not also clearly implied that they had not yet *believed* "to the saving of the soul?"

In the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, St. Peter, in referring to the conversion of the Jews at Pentecost, clearly teaches that

faith, and not *baptism*, was the great instrument of their salvation. In arguing that the Gentiles, who had embraced the gospel, should be received into the communion of the Church, Peter speaks as follows: "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and *believe*. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even *as he did unto us;* and put no difference between us and them, *purifying their hearts by faith*." Here, in speaking of the salvation of the Gentiles, the apostle refers not to their *baptism*, but to their *faith*—"that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and *believe*." And, again, he says: "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by *faith*." Now, here is proof positive that the Gentiles had their hearts purified by *faith*, and not by *baptism;* that is, they were *converted, justified, pardoned, saved*, and their *sins were remitted* by *faith*, not *baptism*.

Again, precisely as it was with the Gentiles, so was it with the Jews at Pentecost. God put no difference between them. According to St. Peter, then, as the Gentiles received remission through faith, so did the Jews at Pentecost. Thus it is clear that, according to the apostle's comment on his own words, when he said, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins," *faith* was necessarily implied in connection with *repentance*, as the grand instrument or condition through which remission was obtained. It is, therefore, manifest that the passage under review, so far from teaching that baptism is the instrument, condition, or means, by or through which the remission of sins is obtained, does, most explicitly, when the apostle is allowed to comment on his own language, teach the inseparable connection of the remission of sins with *faith*, and not with *baptism*.

One or two other texts have also been urged in support of the theory here opposed. For instance, the words of Ananias to Saul have been quoted: "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." But the arguments already presented on the subject will apply with equal force against the doctrine, from whatever Scripture its proof may be attempted; therefore, we examine the testimony no farther.

We arrive, then, at the conclusion that although water baptism should not be too lightly esteemed, and either set aside as not necessary under the gospel, or viewed as merely a form of initiation, or as a help to the exercise of faith, neither, on the other hand, should it be exalted too highly, as possessing intrinsic virtue and saving efficacy. The truth is

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this: it is a *sign* of Christian men's profession, and also of the inward spiritual grace of regeneration and sanctification, and a *seal* of the gracious covenant by which the Church relation and the promise of eternal life are confirmed unto God's people.

But yet, it is but an external ordinance. It is no substitute for the blood of atonement, by which alone sins can be washed away; or for the influence of the Holy Spirit, by which alone the regeneration and sanctification of the soul can be secured.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XII.

QUESTION 1. What is the *etymology* of the word *baptism?*

2. Can *it* impart any light as to the *nature* or *design* of the ordinance?

3. Where do we date the *origin* of *Christian* baptism?

4. What evidence have we that the Jews practiced a *proselyte* baptism?

5. What was its *design?*

6 What was the *design* of the *Jewish baptisms under the law?*

7. What was the nature of *John's baptism?*

8. How is it proved that *John's* was not the *Christian* baptism?

9. What *relation* did the baptism Christ commanded his disciples to perform previous to his crucifixion, sustain to the *Christian* baptism?

10 Is the Christian baptism of *universal* or *perpetual obligation?*

11. By what *arguments* is this position sustained?

12. How has the attempt been made to *disprove* the position?

13. What is the Roman Catholic view as to the nature of Christian baptism?

14. What the view of High-church Episcopalians?

15. What the view of Alexander Campbell?

16. Is there any material difference between these views?

17. How may Mr. Campbell's view be shown to be erroneous?

18. Upon what scriptures has he mainly based his argument on the subject?

19. What is the reply to his argument?

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM—ITS SUBJECTS.

It is admitted by all who believe in the propriety of water baptism that *believers in Christ*, or all who are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," are proper subjects of baptism; hence we deem it useless to stop a moment to present proof upon that subject. The question we propound is this, Are *believers* the *only* proper subjects of baptism? That the Baptist position upon this question is erroneous, we shall endeavor to show.

I. That the INFANT CHILDREN of believing parents are proper subjects of Christian baptism, is a plain, direct, and necessary inference from *the express statute and appointment of God.*

He who will believe nothing that is not formally declared, in so many words, in Scripture, must expunge from his creed a large portion of the important truths which are firmly believed by the entire body of orthodox Christians. It is admitted by every intelligent, unbiased mind that, in all the judicial proceedings of courts, and according to the acknowledged principles of sound logic, *inferential* testimony is often as satisfactory and convincing as direct proof possibly can be; therefore to discard or deny the validity of inferential testimony, is only to give evidence that we are governed in our opinions by the arbitrary impulse of blinded prejudice rather than the sober dictates of calm and correct reasoning. To illustrate this principle, we remark that the Scriptures nowhere, in direct terms, declare that God exists; yet who will not admit that the existence of God is abundantly established in the Bible by inferential testimony? There is no record in Scripture commanding sacrificial worship in the patriarchal age; yet who for a moment can doubt that this method of worship originated in divine appointment? There is no direct precept in the Bible changing the Sabbath to the *first* day of the week, yet the fact is generally recognized. Family prayer is admitted to be a duty, but where is direct precept for it? Similar observations might be made in reference to various other important religious obligations, which, though not di-

rectly enjoined, are acknowledged to rest on inferential testimony entirely satisfactory.

We will now proceed to show that infant baptism is established by inferential testimony deduced from the direct command of God. And, first, we remark that all law, to be obligatory upon the subject, must be enacted by a power having the right to command; and when thus enacted, it remains in force until the same authority by which it was enacted, or some other power of equal authority, shall repeal it. The truth of this position, we think, cannot be questioned. Now if it can be shown that the right of infants to membership in the Church of God was once established by direct enactment of Heaven, and that the right of baptism now pertains to all who are entitled to membership in the Church, it necessarily follows that infants are entitled to baptism, unless it can be shown that the divine enactment by which their membership in the Church was once recognized has been annulled by the authority of God.

That the premises in this argument may be rendered indubitable, we proceed, *first*, to show that infants were embraced in the *Abrahamic covenant*, and were by the appointment of God recognized as members of the Church established in the family of that patriarch, and signed and sealed as such by the rite of circumcision. God spoke thus to Abraham: "This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your generations. . . . And the uncircumcised man-child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." Gen. xvii. 10–14.

Upon this subject we consider it needless to multiply quotations. The point before us is a very plain one. The position we here take, we believe, is universally admitted. Indeed, it cannot be denied. It is this, that infants, both male and female, were admitted by the circumcision of the males into the covenant relation to God, as members of the Church of God, from the establishment of that Church in Abraham's family down to the coming of Christ.

II. We proceed, in the next place, to show that *the covenant made with Abraham, and the Church established in his family on the basis of that covenant, were substantially* THE SAME COVENANT AND THE SAME CHURCH *more fully unfolded and continued under the gospel dispensation.*

It is readily admitted that the gospel, as set forth in the New Testament, reveals a *new dispensation* of religion; but the question is, Does it exhibit an essentially *new Church?* We affirm that it does not.

What, we demand, constitutes the *essential identity* of the Church? Is it necessary that it be the same in every particular circumstance pertaining to it? Surely not. By this rule nothing belonging to this world preserves its identity for a single day; for all things about us are subject to continual mutations. The human body is constantly changing, yet the babe of a day old maintains its essential identity up to old age. A political government may undergo numerous important modifications, yet it may continue the identical government for a succession of years, or even for centuries; just so, the Church may preserve its essential identity while it passes through a variety of fortunes. The government of Great Britain, or of the United States, may experience a variety of changes—it may change its chief ruler, its ministry, its administration, and measures of policy; yet still, while its constitution and governing power remain essentially the same, it is the same government.

With these general principles before us, we will examine the Scriptures touching the *identity* of the Church from the days of Abraham to the present time.

First, we notice the *appellations* given to the Church in ancient times. God styles the descendants of Abraham his "people," his "sheep," his "vine" or "vineyard," his "children," his "elect" or "chosen," his "own," his "sons and daughters," and his "Church." St. Stephen terms the Jewish people in the days of Moses the "Church": "This is he that was in the Church (*ἐκκγησία*) in the wilderness," etc. Acts vii. 38. David uses similar language: "In the midst of the Church (*kahal—ἐκκλησία*) will I praise thee." Ps. xxii. 22. In confirmation of the same position, St. Paul says: "Unto us was the *gospel preached*, as well as unto them." Heb. iv. 2. And again: "They did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and *that Rock was Christ.*" 1 Cor. x. 4. And Christ says: "Abraham rejoiced to see *my day;* and *he saw it,* and was glad." John viii. 56.

The identity of the Jewish Church with that of the gospel is also manifest from the words of Christ to the Jews: "Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matt. xxi. 43. Read the whole parable upon which this text is the comment, and then say, What "kingdom" was to be "taken from" the Jews and "given" to the Gen

tiles? If it was not the Church, what else could it have been? The passage is susceptible of no other interpretation. The "kingdom of God" taken from the Jews was identical with the "kingdom" given to the Gentiles; hence the Jewish and Christian Churches are essentially the same.

St. Paul exhibits the Church of God under the emblem of an "olive-tree." This he borrows from Jeremiah, who, speaking of the Jewish Church, says: "The Lord called thy name, A green *olive-tree*, fair, and of goodly fruit; with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken." Jer. xi. 16.

In reference to the rejection of the Jews and the admission of the Gentiles into the Church under the gospel, St. Paul comments as follows: "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise, thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in; for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive-tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive-tree." Rom. xi. 15-24.

The scope of the apostle's reasoning is so plain here that it cannot be misunderstood by an intelligent, unbiased person. The Jews were originally embraced in Church relation with Abraham and the heads of the Jewish Church, who are represented as the "first-fruit" which was "holy"—that is, they were consecrated, or set apart in a sacred Church relation, represented under the emblem of a "good olive-tree." From this tree they were "broken off because of unbelief." Into this same tree, or into the same covenant relation and Church privileges, the believing Gentiles were ingrafted. But did this rejection of the unbelieving Jews destroy the primitive Church of God into which they

had been taken? By no means. The unfruitful branches "were broken off," but the original stock remained. The "good olive-tree" yet stood firm, and into the same stock the Gentiles were ingrafted.

The Gentile Church was formed, not by the planting of an original tree, not by a new Church organization from the foundation, but by the bringing of new materials upon the old foundation. The establishment of the Christian Church was not the erection of a *new* house, but the removal of "the middle wall of partition," that both Jews and Gentiles, according to God's original purpose and the promise made to Abraham, might dwell together as one "household of faith" in that same divinely constructed edifice which was "built upon the foundation," (not of the apostles alone, but) "of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." Eph. ii. 20.

Now, we demand, unless the New Testament Church is a continuation of the original Church established in the family of Abraham, *essentially* the same, though under a change of dispensation, how is it possible to place any sensible construction upon the language of St. Paul in the passage presented? We confidently affirm that the passage admits of no other interpretation; and if so, does it not follow that as infants were by divine appointment received into the Abrahamic Church, therefore they still retain the right of Church-membership derived from the original charter, and consequently they have a right to baptism. The only possible way to escape this conclusion will be to show that the law of God conferring upon infants, in the days of Abraham, the right to covenant and Church privileges has been repealed under the gospel; but this never has been, and, as we are sure, never *can* be done.

III. As another link in our chain of argument, we proceed to show that BAPTISM CAME IN THE ROOM OF CIRCUMCISION.

For one thing to be admitted as *a substitute for* or *in the room of* another, it is not necessary that they be the same *in every particular and circumstance;* for then the two would be identical, and the idea of substitution would be an absurdity. It is enough if they occupy the same essential position, and serve the same purpose in reference to their most important particulars.

That the sacrament of the "Supper" is in the room of the "Passover" will not be disputed. They are both feasts to be regularly kept up by the people of God; they both have a spiritual import expressed under emblems; they were both designed to assist the faith and promote the spiritual improvement of the worshipers; they both pointed to the same great sacrifice—"the Lamb of God, which taketh away

the sin of the world;" yet they differed in various particulars, and these points of difference were precisely of such character as the nature of the two dispensations would naturally indicate.

The gospel is peculiarly contradistinguished from the Mosaic institute as well as from the patriarchal religion by its *greater degree of mildness* and *the extension of its privileges;* so it is with the "Supper" as compared with the "Passover." In the one, was the bloody offering of the slain lamb and the partaking of a full meal; in the other, is simply the contrite and believing heart with the "bread" and the "wine." The one is certainly done away; and the other, ordained in its room and stead, is to be perpetuated "alway," showing "the Lord's death till he come." The one looked through the dim distance to a Messiah *to come;* the other, to Calvary, to him who had already come, and died for the sins of the world.

As the "Lord's-supper" is related to the "Passover," just so is "baptism" to "circumcision." The analogy in the case is almost perfect. Baptism, as compared with circumcision, is milder in its requirements, and more extended in the application of its privileges. In the one, we see a bloody and painful rite; in the other, the pure fountain of baptismal water. In the one, the Jews only, as a nation, are concerned; in the other, the mission is to "all the world," to "every creature." In the one, the requirement only referred to *males,* and the *eighth day* was specifically designated as the time for the observance of the rite; in the other, both sexes were included, and all days, and times, and seasons, were alike sanctioned and allowed. Thus it appears that although baptism differed in several particulars from circumcision, yet, in all these points of difference, the change from the one to the other is only such as the peculiar characteristics of the gospel would naturally indicate.

But we now inquire for the evidence sustaining the position that *baptism is in the room of circumcision.*

1. They are *seals* and *signs* of the same covenant.

In the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul, speaking of Abraham, says: "He received the *sign* of circumcision, a *seal* of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law

be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. . . . Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations.)" Rom. iv. 11–17.

The account here given of circumcision is susceptible of no sensible solution, unless we interpret it to teach that circumcision occupied, in connection with the ancient Church, precisely the same position that is filled by baptism under the gospel. It is here a *sign* and a *seal*, but of what? Was it a sign and seal of the Sinaitic covenant? Did it partake of the nature of the ceremonies of the Mosaic ritual? Did it merely ratify the divine promise to the Jews of the temporal mercies of Canaan? Surely no such construction is admissible. It sealed "the righteousness of faith," not that of the law; even the righteousness which Abraham had, "yet being uncircumcised." It was a seal of the covenant under which Abraham was "justified by faith," "that he might be the father of all who believe" under the gospel.

Was circumcision the initiatory rite of the Church in the days of Abraham and Moses? so was baptism in the days of Peter and of Paul. Was circumcision a sign or token of visible membership in the Church of God, and of covenant relation to him? so is baptism. Was circumcision an emblem of moral cleansing and purification? so is baptism. Did circumcision point to the remission of sins by the atonement of Christ, and to regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit? so does baptism. Circumcision, all admit, has passed away. It ceased as the gospel was established; but baptism now occupies the same position, means the same thing, seals the same covenant, the same righteousness, and is a pledge of the same spiritual benefits. If baptism be not in the room of circumcision, then we ask, Where is now the initiatory rite of the Church? where is the seal of "the righteousness of faith"? where is the external badge to distinguish the children of Abraham? They are not to be found; and the Church is left with no initiatory rite, no seal of the covenant, no external pledge, confirming to the children of Abraham the gracious promise of the glorious inheritance of the spiritual Canaan.

But it is said by some that "the Abrahamic covenant was only a Jewish grant, and promised only temporal mercies." This position is too unscriptural to be admitted. Adopt this theory, and what becomes of the promise to Abraham—'I will make thee the father of many nations," and "in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed"?

Does this language indicate merely temporal mercies to the Jews alone? No, verily; it embodies the great gospel charter of salvation to all the world upon the condition of faith in Christ. We urge the inquiry, What has become of the Abrahamic covenant? Shall we be told that it has passed away with "the law of commandments contained in ordinances," "Christ having nailed it to his cross?" St. Paul hath triumphantly refuted this position. Hear his language: "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise." Gal. iii. 17, 18.

Now, we demand, what is the argument of the apostle here? He was maintaining against the Judaizing teachers that the Gentiles were embraced in the Abrahamic covenant, and consequently were entitled to the privileges of the gospel Church. But how does he reason? Plainly thus: The "covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ" was the covenant with "Abraham," which was confirmed by the "seal of circumcision." This covenant "the law cannot disannul;" and why? Because it did not take its existence from the law, but was given "to Abraham four hundred and thirty years" before the giving of the law; and as it did not derive its existence from the law, so neither can it be dependent on the law for the continuance of that existence. The law, with its shadows and ceremonies, may "wax old" and "vanish away," being fulfilled in Christ; but not so the Abrahamic covenant which preceded it. This covenant confirmed unto Abraham and his seed all the rich and endless blessings of the everlasting gospel. Of this covenant, circumcision was the seal up to the coming of Christ. Under the gospel, the seal is changed; circumcision is done away—it now "availeth nothing." But is the covenant disannulled? It stands in all its force; it has lost nothing of its importance and value. The Sinaitic covenant may perish, and with it the peculiar national and temporal immunities of the Jewish people; but while the oath of God stands firm, the Abrahamic covenant shall remain unshaken on its foundation, undiminished in its blessings, and undimmed in its luster. And this is the covenant by which the Church of God originally arose into being; it has been the great unfailing charter of that same Church in all ages, even from Abraham to Moses, from Moses to David, from David to Christ, and shall continue such, not only till the wandering and outcast tribes of God's ancient people shall be brought back with the "fullness of the Gentiles," and all nations shall be blessed in the

Redeemer, but till the consummation of the last achievement of Heaven's redeeming scheme.

If, then, as we are compelled to admit, the Church, as to its essential identity, the covenant, confirming the chartered blessings of salvation, and the promise, securing to believers the heritage of eternal life, all remain unchanged, and these same blessings, once sealed and pledged by *circumcision*, are now sealed and pledged by *baptism*, does it not follow that *baptism has taken the place of circumcision?*

The argument here presented in favor of infant baptism may be briefly stated thus: The Church of God is essentially the same Church now that it was when God commanded that infants should be admitted into it as members. God has never authorized the repeal of that command; hence it is still in force; consequently, infants are now entitled to membership in the Church. But membership in the Church of God can now only be conferred through the initiatory rite of baptism; therefore, as infants are entitled to Church-membership, they have also a right to baptism.

Again, substantially the same argument may be stated in another form, thus:

The Abrahamic covenant and that of the gospel are the same; God once ordained that all, upon entering upon this covenant relation with him, should receive the *sign* and *seal* of circumcision. What was once confirmed by the sign and seal of circumcision is now by divine appointment confirmed by the sign and seal of baptism; therefore baptism has come in the room of circumcision. Infants by divine appointment had a right to circumcision; but baptism having come in the room of circumcision, therefore they have a right to baptism.

Again, the Church of God is essentially *one* in all ages. God has enacted that infants constitute a part of that one Church, and that enactment has never been repealed; therefore infants are still a part of that Church. All who compose the Church have a right to all its ordinances which they are capable of receiving; but baptism is an ordinance of the Church which infants are capable of receiving; therefore infants have a right to baptism.

IV. We now proceed to examine some plain passages of Scripture found in the *New Testament*, bearing upon the question before us.

The opposers of infant baptism have clamored long and loud for some "*explicit warrant*" for this practice. "Baptism," say they, "is a positive institute, therefore we cannot admit the application of this ordinance to infants without a 'Thus saith the Lord.' Bring us a direct

command from the Bible, or a plain statement of the fact that the apostles baptized infants, and then we will admit them to the ordinance."

Suppose we were to admit that Christ has not, in so many words, explicitly commanded the baptism of infants, and that it is not directly authorized by any unquestionable apostolic example, would the propriety of infant baptism be thereby disproved? Are we to reject from our creed and practice every thing for which we cannot produce an express Scripture warrant? Some observations have already been made on this point, but a few additional remarks seem to be pertinent in this connection. The masterly production of the Rev. Peter Edwards on Baptism, with all who will read it, sets the question here under review forever at rest. He demonstrates most conclusively the fallacy of the Baptists in their reasoning on the subject of "explicit warrant" for infant baptism.

The substance of the reply to this subterfuge of the Baptists may be briefly stated thus:

The argument proves too much; therefore nothing. Any reasoning which proves what all admit to be false must be fallacious, and cannot in fairness be adopted by any party. All concede the propriety of admitting *females* to the communion of the "Lord's-supper," and yet the same argument here urged against infant baptism would most unquestionably exclude them. Female communion is as destitute of any "explicit warrant" from Scripture as infant baptism can be supposed to be, even by its opponents.

Mr. Edwards affirms: "1. That, according to the principles and reasoning of the Baptists, a woman, however qualified, can have no right at all to the Lord's-table. 2. That the Baptists, in opposing infant baptism and defending female communion, do shift their ground, contradict themselves, and prevaricate most pitifully. 3. That, according to their principles and mode of reasoning, God had no Church in this world for at least fifteen hundred years."

We remark that it is admitted by all that both baptism and the Lord's-supper are *positive* institutes; hence it is obvious that any reasoning against infant baptism, founded on the fact that it is a *positive* institute, will be equally applicable to the Lord's-supper. Now we affirm that it is impossible to prove the right of females to the Lord's-supper by "explicit warrant." This never has been, and never *can* be done; yet all admit that they have that right. If, then, they have that right without "explicit warrant," how can we reject infants from baptism, another positive institute, merely for the lack of an "explicit

warrant"? In other words, if the right of infants to baptism and the right of females to communion are both proved by the same mode of reasoning, we cannot, without manifest inconsistency, admit female communion and reject infant baptism. But female communion can only be proved by *inferential* testimony; hence, it follows that, if infant baptism can be proved by a similar kind of testimony, if we admit the one, we must also admit the other.

Although the proof of infant baptism, already presented, or which may yet be exhibited, may not be of that class strictly comprehended by the term "explicit warrant," yet we maintain that it is equally satisfactory and convincing.

1 We now call attention to *our Saviour's language* in reference to infants: "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." (Mark x. 13–16.) Again, we read, "And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, and said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me." (Luke ix. 47, 48.) And, again, it is recorded, "And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them; but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." (Luke xviii. 15–17.)

(1) Our first remark in reference to these passages is, that there can be no doubt that these were *real infants* that were brought to Christ; that is, *infants* in regard to age. This is plain from the fact that our Lord "took them up in his arms."

(2) To receive one *in the name of Christ* is to receive him as belonging to Christ—as in covenant relation and visible union with him—as a member of that body, or Church, of which he is the head.

(3) The phrase, "kingdom of God," here evidently means the Church of God on earth, and not the heavenly state. This is clear from the fact that it cannot be said of all children that they are members of the Church in heaven; for they might live to maturity, die in their sins, and

perish everlastingly. Hence, children are here recognized as members of the gospel Church on earth by our Lord himself.

(4) The phrase "*of such* is the kingdom of God," or "of heaven," as St. Matthew records it (Matt. xix. 13–15), cannot, as some suppose, mean merely that "the kingdom of heaven" is composed of persons of a child-like disposition. Such construction would reduce our Lord's reasoning to nonsense; for how can the fact that adults of a child-like disposition are members of the Church, or belong to the "kingdom of heaven," furnish any reason why children—*infants*—should be brought to Christ for his blessing? But if infants have a covenant relation to Christ, as connected with his gospel Church on earth, then there is propriety in saying: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The reason for suffering infants to come to Christ must not be found in others, but in the *infants themselves;* for the Saviour has placed it there.

(5) As it is manifest, according to the most obvious construction of our Saviour's language, that he here recognizes infants as connected with the gospel Church, it follows that they are entitled to baptism.

2. *St. Paul affirms* that "*all our fathers* were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were *all baptized* unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." (1 Cor. x. 1, 2.)

We readily admit that the baptism here spoken of by the apostle was not the *Christian* baptism, distinctively so called; yet it was a *scriptural* baptism, so recognized by the inspired apostle. Turn now to Exodus, the twelfth chapter, and you will find that these "fathers" who were "baptized unto Moses," embraced "six hundred thousand men, beside *children*, and a mixed multitude." These "children," of course, embraced children of all ages—*infants*, as well as older children; for the Israelites took all their households with them. Here, then, we have recorded in the New Testament one clear *example* of infant baptism. The fact cannot be denied. We do not, however, rely upon this example of infant baptism as furnishing our proof of that ordinance in the Christian Church; we only refer to it as a refutation of the oft-repeated boast that there is no example of infant baptism recorded in the Bible.

3. We know not how to construe *our Lord's grand commission* to his apostles without finding in it an express *command* to baptize infants. This commission has been more than once quoted for different purposes. We will not here repeat it. It is enough to say that in this commission the apostles are commanded to "disciple and baptize *all nations*." That the word *μαθητεύσατε*, here rendered "*teach*," means to "*proselyte*," or to "*disciple*," no scholar will deny. As the text is rendered in our ver-

sion, Matthew is made to be guilty of a tautology inconsistent with his character as a writer. Christ is said to command the apostles to "teach all nations;" and then, in the next verse, to repeat the same command, "teaching them," etc. In the Greek of this text there is no tautology. In the nineteenth verse, the word used by the apostle means, as we have said, "*disciple* all nations," or make *proselytes* of them. In the twentieth verse Matthew does not use the same word he had used in the nineteenth verse, but διδάσχοντες, from διδάσκω, *to teach*. The import of the command is, "Go *disciple* all nations;" but how? Plainly, by first "baptizing them;" and then, as they may be able to receive it, "teaching them," etc.

Now, the question with which we are directly concerned is this: Are *infants* included as a part of the "all nations" here mentioned? Most assuredly, we reply, they are; for it takes both sexes, all classes, all conditions, and all ages, to constitute the nation. But the apostles were commanded to "baptize *all nations*," and *infants are a part* of "all nations;" therefore, the apostles were commanded *to baptize infants*.

The logical conclusion here arrived at cannot be escaped by entering the plea that, "as infants are incapable of being *taught*, hence they ought not to be baptized." It would be fallacious reasoning to argue that because there are impediments in the way of executing *one* command, therefore it is wrong to obey *another* command in the way of which there are no impediments.

The apostles could neither "go into all the world" *at once*, nor "preach to every creature" *at once*. There were impediments in the way. The plain, common-sense construction is this: all divine commands, and all parts of the apostles' commission, should be obeyed just as soon and as fully as the nature and circumstances of the case admit. No impediment in reference to *one* duty can release from obligation in reference to *another*.

How, we ask, may we reasonably suppose the apostles would understand this commission? They were all Jews, strongly prejudiced in favor of the religion and customs of their nation. For centuries past that people had been familiar with a religion whose uniform polity, and that *too* originating in divine appointment, had recognized *infants* with their parents as members of the Church—the only Church God had ever organized in the world. They were familiar also with the custom of inducting Gentile proselytes—the *children*, with their parents—into the Church by the same sacred rite. How, then, we repeat, would they naturally construe the terms of their commission? Would they ever dream that they were to "disciple" *only the adult* portion of "all na-

tions"? Had they been told that *children* were no longer to dwell with their parents in covenant and Church relation to God, would not their Jewish training and prejudice have revolted at the idea?

That the apostles could have understood their mission as not including the *infants* as a part of the "nations," we believe to be a moral impossibility. If this be so, the Saviour knew it when he gave the commission; then it will follow either that Christ intentionally deceived the apostles, or he gave them authority to "disciple," or admit into Church relation the *infants* of believing parents. The former supposition is impossible, therefore the latter must be true; and if so, we cannot escape the conclusion that we have here a divine command for the *baptism* of the *infant children of believing parents.*

5. We now notice the proceedings of the apostles in the *execution of their commission.*

In his sermon at Pentecost, St. Peter opened the gospel kingdom to the Jews. After having instructed his convicted hearers to "repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," promising them "the gift of the Holy Ghost," he gives, as a reason for their compliance, the following fact: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts ii. 38, 39.)

We now inquire, does this passage contain any intimation that infants are to be recognized as sustaining any connection with the gospel Church? That we may understand this text, we must know to what promise the apostle refers. As a clue to this inquiry, we remark that it must be some promise in which, *first*, the *Jews* and *their children* were specially interested; *secondly*, it must be some promise in which the *Gentiles* were also interested, and to which they were to be *called.* Where shall we find such a promise?

The Baptists, to escape the consequence that would result to their system by the admission that the apostle here referred to the great promise connected with the Abrahamic covenant, have entered the plea that the allusion of St. Peter, in this place, is *exclusively* to the promise of Joel ii. 28, 29, which he had quoted in the commencement of his discourse. It is true that, so far as the effusion of the Holy Spirit is concerned, the promise of Joel had already been referred to as recording the prediction whose fulfillment had just been witnessed. But in the thirty-ninth verse the apostle refers to a promise, not to explain the fact of the miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost, but to encourage his convicted and distressed hearers to "repent and be baptized." The word "for," in the commencement of the thirty-ninth verse, connects directly,

not with the promise of Joel, but with the preceding verse, "Repent and be baptized," etc. *Why* should they "repent and be baptized?" "For (γάρ—*because*) the promise is unto *you*, and to *your children*, and to all that are *afar off*, even as many as the Lord our God *shall call*."

It is most certain that the direct reference of the apostle must have been to some other promise than that of Joel; for he (Joel) refers only to adults, while Peter says "to *you*," adults, and to "your *children*." The inspired apostle could not have blundered. He must have referred to a promise containing all the items included in his specifications. If no such promise could be found, we should certainly be puzzled to vindicate the accuracy of the apostle's quotation; but as it is, nothing but blinded prejudice in favor of a theory can hide from our view the promise in question.

After reading the language of Peter in this place, we have only to turn to Genesis, the seventeenth chapter, and beginning at the seventh verse, we may find the noted promise quoted by the apostle in almost the exact words, and embracing the specifications in full. St. Peter says, "unto *you* and to *your children*." The promise reads (Gen. xvii. 7), "To be a God *unto thee* and unto *thy seed* after thee." There is here a complete harmony in phraseology. In the one we read, "unto *thee* and *thy seed*;" in the other, "unto *you* and to *your children*." But there is not only a correspondence in *terms*, but also in subject-matter; each refers to the great covenant of grace, and also to a rite of initiation into the Church under that covenant. In the one that rite was circumcision; in the other, baptism.

Look at the circumstances of the speaker and hearers on this memorable occasion, and how is it possible that either the one or the others could have understood these terms—"*thee* and *thy seed*," "*you* and *your children*"—in any other sense than that of implying *parents* and their *infants*? That the words in Genesis, where the promise is issued, embraced *infants*, Baptists themselves will not deny; and if so, Peter could not have quoted that promise in so nearly the exact words, and then change it in its import in a matter so sacred to the heart of every Jew as was the covenant Church relation of his children, without a word of comment concerning that change, or even an intimation that it had been made. And stranger still is the hypothesis that that prejudiced and bigoted people, who were ever ready to "wrangle for a rite, quarrel for a fast, and almost fight for a new moon," could have so quiescently witnessed the excision of their infant children from the covenant Church of God, and yet not a murmur from their lips be heard on the subject, either at Pentecost, when Peter first announced baptism as the rite of

initiation under the new dispensation, or at any time subsequently, amid all their Judaizing clamors! The supposition is incredible. Then, we demand, do we not here find, in the words of the apostle, a satisfactory *Scripture warrant* for infant baptism?

If it be contended that "the promise here is not to *infant* children, but only to adult posterity," to this we reply that such a construction is contradicted by the fact in the case. The Jews always understood it as applying to their infants at eight days old, and practiced upon it accordingly for centuries.

Again, if it be said that "the latter clause of St. Peter's address—'even as many as the Lord our God shall call'—limits the promise exclusively to the 'called,' and consequently it could not embrace infants," to this we reply that the apostle makes no such limit. Those whom he addressed were the actually "called." In reference to *them* he says, "the promise is to *you*." But he does not stop; he goes on—"and to *your children*;" that is, the children of those addressed. The plain construction of the language is this: "The promise is unto *you* and to *your children*, and to all that are afar off," and to *their children*, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call," and to *their children*.

The promise was, unquestionably, that embraced in the Abrahamic covenant, extending the gospel tender of salvation to the Gentiles who were "afar off," and who were to be "called," with *their children*, into communion and covenant fellowship with the Jews and *their children*, in the bosom of that same original Church of God, from which the Jews, as a nation, for their unbelief, were now to be "broken off," as unfruitful "branches" of the "good olive-tree."

Therefore we have the most indubitable evidence from the passage under review that infants, under the new economy, are placed in the same relation to baptism as they were to circumcision under the old. The language of Peter is almost precisely the same as that of the promise referred to in Genesis. In the one place the promise is connected with circumcision, and all who shared the promise received the rite. In the other place, the promise is connected with baptism, and all who share the promise *should* receive the rite. But infants are connected with the promise in both instances; and from Abraham up to Christ they shared, with their parents, the rite of circumcision. Hence it is clear that, as infants are still, as much as ever, connected with the same covenant promise, they are entitled to Christian baptism.

6. The baptism of several *households*, under the apostolic administration, will, when the several instances are closely examined, furnish strong ground for believing that the apostles baptized the children with the

parents, upon the conversion of the latter. In the cases of "household" baptism recorded, we do not claim that there were *certainly* infants in any of those families. There may or may not have been, so far as we have any direct evidence. We think it probable that there were. But what we *do* claim in reference to this subject is, that the apostles seem to have acted upon the principle that parents were to bring their children with them into the Church, according to the long-established Jewish practice.

The first case of this kind to which we refer, is that of Lydia and her household. "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which *worshiped God*, *heard* us; whose heart the *Lord opened*, that *she attended* unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged *me to be faithful* to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there." (Acts xvi. 14, 15.)

In this brief account notice several particulars:

1. "Lydia" and "her household" were baptized.

2. Various particulars are specified in reference to the piety and conversion of Lydia. *She* "worshiped God," *she* "heard" the apostles, "the Lord opened" *her* "heart," *she* "attended unto the things spoken," *she* said, "If ye have judged *me to be faithful*," etc.

3. There is not one word in reference to the piety or conversion of Lydia's household.

Now, if her "household" consisted of adults, why so many items about *her* conversion, and not a syllable in reference to the conversion of her "household"? Admit that her household were *children* who were baptized on the faith of their parent, and all is natural and easy; otherwise it is inexplicable.

Another case of household baptism is that of the *jailer* and his house. (Acts xvi. 30–35.)

1. When the jailer, convicted and trembling, inquired, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" the apostle replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." No intimation that *faith* was required of his *house*. How natural this, if the apostle intended that his *children* were to be admitted to the Church by baptism on the faith of their father! But if his *house* consisted of adults who were to act for themselves, the language seems inappropriate, and not sufficiently explicit for the occasion. 2. The jailer "was baptized, *he* and *all his*, straightway." Yet there is not a word about faith being required of any but the jailer. If it be objected that the apostle spoke the word to "all that were in the house," and that the jailer "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house," hence they were all adults, to this

we reply, although it be admitted that there were adult members of the "house" who *heard* the word and "rejoiced, believing in God," in company with the jailer, yet this does not necessarily exclude *infants* from being also embraced in the "house," and being baptized. It is not said that none received baptism, but such as *heard*, *believed*, and *rejoiced*. The record of the baptism is in a separate verse, and simply states that the jailer "was baptized, he *and all his*, straightway." Here there is no restriction of baptism to such as *believed*. Nor is there any proof that all the "house" believed. It cannot be disputed that the phrase translated, "and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house," might have been more accurately rendered thus, "and he, believing in God, rejoiced with (or over) all his house." Hence, there is still no proof that all the "house" were adults; but there is explicit testimony that the jailer *and all his* were baptized.

Several other "household" baptisms are mentioned in the New Testament; but enough has been said to show that the style of the apostles, in speaking of the baptism of *parents* and their *households*, is perfectly natural, and such as we might reasonably expect, if they proceeded on the principle of receiving *children* with their parents into the Church; but if otherwise, the apostles' account of their own administration was well calculated to mislead the Jewish mind.

V. The historical argument for infant baptism we consider entirely conclusive and satisfactory.

Tertullian, who lived about two hundred years after the birth of Christ, is the first man of whom Church-history furnishes any account who, in any shape, opposed infant baptism. But when we notice his reasons for opposing it, his opposition is an argument rather *for* than *against* it. He had imbibed the superstitious notion that "baptism was accompanied with the remission of all past sins, and that sins committed after baptism were peculiarly dangerous." On this ground, and *this alone*, he advises the postponement of baptism, not only in the case of infants, but also in that of young persons generally, and even young widowers and widows, till they advance to a mature and settled state of life, beyond the period of youthful passion and temptation; and numbers who embraced the same error actually deferred their baptism till old age or a death-bed.

The next opponents of infant baptism of whom we hear were the followers of *Peter de Bruis*, in France, about twelve hundred years after Christ. These were an inconsiderable fraction of the Albigenses, who had departed from the faith of that body. But they opposed infant baptism on the ground that they considered infants incapable of salvation.

The next society of Anti-pedobaptists, and, indeed, the *first* who advocated the tenets of modern Baptists on the subject, arose in Germany, in the sixteenth century; thus it appears that for at least fifteen hundred years there was no society of Christians heard of who opposed infant baptism on the ground of its wanting apostolic authority.

On the other hand, the positive testimony for infant baptism is indubitable.

Origen, a Greek father of the third century, speaks as follows: "According to the usage of the Church, baptism is given even to *infants*, when, if there were nothing in infants which needed forgiveness, the grace of baptism would seem to be superfluous."

Again, "For this cause it was that the Church received an order *from the apostles to give baptism even to infants.*"

Cyprian, a Latin father of the third century, presided over a council of sixty-six bishops, held at Carthage. Fidus, a country pastor, inquired of this council, not whether infant baptism was proper, but whether, as in circumcision, it ought to be always deferred till the child was eight days old? The following is Cyprian's reply: "Cyprian, and the rest of the bishops who were present in the council, sixty-six in number, to Fidus, our brother, greeting: As to the case of infants—whereas you judge that they must not be baptized within two or three days after they are born, and that the rule of circumcision is to be observed, that no one should be baptized and sanctified before the eighth day after he is born, we were all in the council of a very different opinion. As for what you thought proper to be done, no one was of your mind; but we all rather judged that the mercy and grace of God is to be denied to no human being that is born. This, therefore, dear brother, was our opinion in the council: that we ought not to hinder any person from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful and kind to us all. And this rule, as it holds for all, we think more especially to be observed in reference to infants, even to those newly born." (Cyprian, Epist. 66.) Here, then, we have the unanimous decision of a council of sixty-six bishops, not mooting the question whether infant baptism was the universal practice of the Church (that is taken for granted), but whether it is necessary to postpone it till the eighth day.

Chrysostom, a Greek father of the fourth century, speaks of infant baptism thus: "But our circumcision—I mean the grace of *baptism*—has *no determinate time* as that (meaning circumcision) had, but one that is in the *very beginning of his age*, or one that is in the middle of it, or one that is in his old age, may receive this circumcision made without hands." (Hom. 40, in Genesin.)

Augustin, one of the most learned men of his time, who flourished a little more than three centuries after the apostles, had a controversy with Pelagius, a very learned heretic, about original sin. Origen wrote to Pelagius thus: "Why are infants baptized for the remission of sins if they have no sin?" To which Pelagius replies thus: "Baptism ought to be administered to infants with the same sacramental words which are used in the case of adult persons." "Men slander me as if I denied the sacrament of baptism to infants." "I never heard of any, not even the most impious heretic, who denied baptism to infants; for who can be so impious as to hinder infants from being baptized?"

Again, Augustin, referring to the Pelagians, says: "Since they grant that infants must be baptized, as not being able to resist the authority of *the whole Church*, which was doubtless delivered by *our Lord and his apostles*, they must grant that they stand in need of the benefit of the Mediator." Again, he remarks, "The custom of our mother-Church in baptizing infants must not be disregarded, nor accounted needless, nor believed to be any thing else than an ordinance *delivered to us from the apostles.*"

Here, then, is Augustin, familiar with the writings of all the fathers before him, a man of unsurpassed erudition in his day, and Pelagius, a man of great talents and learning, who had enriched his mind with information gathered from extensive travel—these men both testify that they never *saw* or *heard* of one, whether Christian or heretic, who denied the baptism of infants! They lived only about three hundred years after Christ. Can it be that they were ignorant as to the facts, or that they designedly deceived the world? And if not, what, but the most invincible prejudice, can prevent any one from believing that infant baptism had been the universal practice of the Church from the days of the apostles?

We have presented, from Church-history, but a brief outline of the testimony that might be adduced in favor of infant baptism; but to the unprejudiced mind we think it amounts to evidence of the most conclusive and satisfactory character. To our mind it carries irresistible conviction. In three centuries from the apostles' time, many changes had occurred in the Church—many abuses had entered—but that so important and so serious a change as the introduction of infant baptism should have been made so soon, and become the universal practice of the Church, and yet no one ever hear, or read, or speak of the marvelous revolution is utterly incredible.

In the language of an excellent writer (Dr. Miller), we add, that 'when Origen, Cyprian, and Chrysostom, declare not only that the bap-

tism of infants was the universal and unopposed practice of the Church in their respective times and places of residence; and when men of so much acquaintance with all preceding writers, and so much knowledge of all Christendom, as Augustin and Pelagius, declared that they *never heard of any one who claimed to be a Christian, either orthodox or heretic, who did not maintain and practice infant baptism*—to suppose, in the face of such testimony, that the practice of infant baptism crept in as an unwarranted innovation between their time and that of the apostles, without the smallest notice of the change having ever reached their ears, I must be allowed to say, of all incredible suppositions, this is one of the most incredible. He who can believe this must, it appears to me, be prepared to make a sacrifice of all historical evidence at the shrine of blind and deaf prejudice."

But infant baptism can well afford to dispense with all this historic testimony, and its foundation remain firm and unshaken. It grounds its authority upon the appointment of God, in connection with the everlasting covenant with "Abraham and his seed," and the explicit law of God, embracing infants as members of his Church. The same Church still exists—the same law was never annulled. But Christ and his apostles fully recognized both the real identity of the Church and the right of infants, under the new dispensation, to share the benefits of the same abiding covenant of grace. The promise and oath of God can never fail; and while these remain unchanged, infants, with their believing parents, shall ever share in all the rights, privileges, and benefits of the glorious kingdom of Him in whom "all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XIII.

QUESTION 1. Should we reject every thing in religion for which we cannot find an express precept?

2. What kind of testimony is often as satisfactory as direct proof?

3. How can it be shown that infants, by express command of God, were admitted into his Church?

4. How can it be proved that the Abrahamic covenant and the gospel covenant are the same?

5. How can it be proved by the testimony of Christ that the gospel Church and that established in the family of Abraham are the same?

6. And how by the testimony of St. Paul?

7. How can it be proved that baptism came in the room of circumcision?

8. Wherein do these two rites agree, and wherein do they differ?

9. Of what was circumcision the sign and seal?

10. And of what is baptism the sign and seal?

11. How is it proved that the Abrahamic covenant did not pass away with the Mosaic ritual?

12. How is it shown that infant baptism necessarily follows from the admission of the identity of the Abrahamic Church with that of the gospel?

13. What is the argument from our Saviour's language in reference to infants?

14. How is it proved that infants were baptized unto Moses?

15. How is infant baptism proved from the apostolic commission?

16. And how from Peter's language on the day of Pentecost?

17. And how from household baptisms?

18. And how from Church-history?

19. Is the argument from Scripture alone conclusive and satisfactory?

CHAPTER XIV.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM—ITS MODE.

Is IMMERSION *the only proper mode of Christian baptism?* Upon this question there has been much unprofitable controversy. For several centuries past there has been known in the history of the Church a sect called Anabaptists, Anti-pedobaptists, or Baptists, who have strenuously contended that *immersion* is essential to baptism; and have closed the door of their communion against all unimmersed Christians, refusing to recognize any such as members of the visible Church of Christ. But for the fact that a portion of professed Christians have carried their views upon this subject to such an extreme as necessarily to produce a painful and pernicious schism in the body of Christ, we would deem the discussion of this question of scarcely more importance than that of the attitude of the body in the Lord's-supper, or in public prayer. We are free to admit that, while the advocates of exclusive immersion have often transcended the bounds of Christian charity, not to say republican toleration, in their ridicule and denunciation of all who believe and practice differently from them on the subject of baptism, there has sometimes been exhibited too much stringency and sectarian bias on the opposite side.

It is difficult to account for the fierce and long-continued conflict that has been waged upon the *mode* of baptism without coming to the conclusion that it is one of those minor questions connected with theological polemics, concerning which divine inspiration has not seen proper to furnish us *explicit* and *positive* testimony. Believing as we do on this question, we must admire the profound wisdom and Christian charity of the Discipline of our own Church on the *mode* of baptism: "Let every adult person and the parents of every child to be baptized have the choice either of immersion, sprinkling, or pouring." We think it must be admitted by the candid and unprejudiced mind that, after close and thorough investigation, no *explicit* and *positive* testimony can be found in the Scriptures prescribing either *immersion*, *sprinkling*, or *pouring*, as the *only proper mode* of water baptism. We may find a

large preponderance of *probable* or *presumptive* evidence in favor of *one* particular mode derived from facts, circumstances, analogies, allusions, etc.; and this may rationally satisfy the mind, and give to *one* mode a decided preference, but we cannot find positive and undoubted proof that either immersion, sprinkling, or pouring, is *the only proper mode* for the administration of the ordinance.

The limits of this work will not allow us to aim at any thing farther than a presentation of a concise view of the subject in reference to its prominent features. Extended as has been this controversy, the Scripture arguments, *pro* and *con*, may all be derived from the following sources:

1. From the *meaning of the Greek words* used to express baptism.
2. From the *Scripture instances* of baptism.
3. From Scripture *allusions* to baptism.

I. The word employed in the Greek Testament to express the action of baptism is *βαπτίζω*, which comes from the root *βάπτω*. It is contended by immersionists that these words and their derivatives used in Scripture for baptism always express *immersion*, and can never signify *sprinkling* or *pouring*. On the other hand, Pedobaptists maintain that the words in question, though they frequently do express *immersion*, yet often signify *sprinkling* or *pouring*. From this it is clear that, if either party could establish their own position to the satisfaction of their opponents, the controversy would be ended; for the positions here assumed by the respective parties are perfectly conclusive on the question when satisfactorily sustained. Observe, the point at issue is not whether baptism means *immersion*, or whether immersion is its *primary* meaning; but is immersion the *only* meaning of baptism?

To decide this question, so far as the words referred to in the Greek Testament are concerned, an array of Greek lexicons has been paraded. Scapula, Hedericus, Schleusner, Schrevellius, Parkhurst, Suidas, Wahl, Robinson, Groves, Greenfield, Donnegan, and others, have been quoted. The immersionists have very satisfactorily proved by the testimony of all these witnesses that *βαπτίζω* means *to immerse*, and by several of them that *to immerse* is its primary meaning; but this has not ended the dispute. Indeed, as contended by Pedobaptists, the point at issue has not yet been reached. We farther inquire of these witnessing lexicons whether *βαπτίζω* has any other meaning besides immersion. They all respond in harmony: "Yes, it has several meanings." What are they? we demand. Several of them speak at once: "It means *to wash, to wet, to moisten, to dye, to tinge, to purify, to cleanse, to sprinkle.*" We noticed, as these witnesses were deposing, that a few remained silent

while *some* of the definitions were pronounced; but in uttering the definition "*to wash*," *every voice was heard in full and perfect harmony.* "Enough!" cried the Pedobaptist, "it means *to wash.* You all agree in this; then it cannot always mean *to immerse.*"

Allow us to add that a moment's reflection will show that *to immerse* expresses a *specific* action which cannot be performed by *pouring* or *sprinkling*, but *to wash* expresses a *generic* action which may be performed alike by *immersion*, *pouring*, or *sprinkling;* hence we conclude that, as all the lexicons agree that the Greek word βαπτίζω not only means *to immerse* but also *to wash*, and as *washing* may properly be performed by *sprinkling* or *pouring* as well as by *immersion*, therefore we can derive no evidence from the mere import of the Greek term used in the New Testament for that ordinance that *immersion* is the *only proper mode* of administering it.

It should also be remembered, in connection with this etymological argument, that there are several places in the New Testament in which the Greek word for baptize and its derivatives cannot mean immersion.

"And when they come from the market, except they *wash*, they eat not." Mark vii. 4. Here the word rendered "wash" is βαπτίσωνται—*baptize*—a variation of βαπτίζω. Who believes that the Jews immersed themselves habitually before eating? "And when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that he had not first *washed* before dinner." Luke xi. 38. Here the word for "washed" is ἐβαπτίσθη, from βαπτίζω. Surely no one supposes that the Pharisee expected our Lord to *immerse* himself, but simply to *wash* his hands.

The fact that the "baptism of the Holy Ghost" was unquestionably performed, not by *immersion*, but by *pouring*, as we shall fully show in its proper place, is an unanswerable refutation of the position that βαπτίζω *always means immersion*, and nothing else.

II. We proceed to notice some of the *Scripture instances of baptism.*

1. First, we call attention to the baptism of the "fathers unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," spoken of by St. Paul (1 Cor. x. 1, 2). On turning to the account of this baptism, as recorded by Moses, we find that, when the Israelites crossed the sea, it was on "dry land"—they passed over it upon "dry ground;" hence the notion that they were there and then immersed is utterly preposterous. In what mode, then, could they have been baptized? If we had no clue to the solution of this question farther than the Mosaic history, we might feel that we were involved in perplexity. But how admirably does one scripture often explain another! The Prophet Asaph has left us a comment

on the record of Moses. He explains that "the clouds poured out water" upon the Israelites as they crossed the Red Sea (Ps. lxxvii. 17); hence, whatever may be our conclusion as to the mode of *Christian* baptism, it is certain that this *Mosaic* baptism was administered by *pouring*. Such is the testimony of the Bible; for "the clouds *poured out water*;" and this demonstrates also that baptism does not always mean immersion. We may conjecture and speculate as much as we please about "the clouds being above the Israelites, and the sea, as walls, on each side enveloping them, as it were, in an immersion;" but still the Scripture affirms that they were on "dry ground," and that they were baptized by *pouring*. From these facts there is no escape. Surely, to find immersion in this case will exhibit a wonderful feat of imagination.

2. "*The baptism of John*" is also appealed to by immersionists as furnishing proof that there is no proper baptism but immersion.

The argument is this: "John baptized *in* Jordan, and also *in* Enon near to Salim, because there was *much water* there;" hence it is concluded he must have baptized by immersion.

That the Greek preposition ἐν, here translated *in*, always means *in* will not be contended. It may mean *at*, *by*, *with*, or *near to*; and the context must determine the sense. In Matthew iii. 6, it is said that John "baptized *in* Jordan;" but in the eleventh verse of the same chapter, John says: "I indeed baptize you *with* water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, . . . he shall baptize you *with* the Holy Ghost." Here the same preposition ἐν is used both before "water" and "Holy Ghost," and our translators have rendered the preposition, in both instances, *with* instead of *in*; hence nothing as to the *mode* can be proved by the preposition. But an argument of much force may be derived from the manner in which John connects his *water* baptism with our Saviour's baptism of the *Holy Ghost*. These baptisms are here presented in such connection that, in the absence of proof to the contrary, to conclude that both were not administered in the same *mode* would be most unwarranted. But the baptism of the Holy Ghost was unquestionably performed by *pouring*; therefore the rational inference is that John baptized in the same way. As the disciples were not dipped, plunged, or immersed, into the Holy Ghost, but the Holy Ghost descended or *fell upon them*, even so we may conclude that John did not dip, plunge, or immerse, the multitudes into the water, but that he poured or sprinkled the water upon them. As in the baptism of the Holy Ghost the influence descended upon or was applied to the subjects, even so, if there is any analogy in the case, in

the baptism of John the water, or element, was applied to the subject of baptism, and not the subject to the element.

In John i. 28, we read: "These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing." Here the same preposition *ἐν* is used before "Bethabara;" but Bethabara was not a *river*, but a *house*—the word means *a house of passage*—and that *house* was not *in* the River Jordan, but "beyond Jordan." Now if *ἐν* before Jordan proves that John baptized *in* Jordan, and therefore must have immersed, according to the same logic, *ἐν* before Bethabara would prove that John baptized *in* a *house*, and therefore *not* by immersion. The truth is, the preposition proves nothing on either side as to the mode. The true sense of the preposition here is probably *at*, or *near to;* and then John baptized *at* or *near to* Jordan, and *at* or *near to* Bethabara. The probability is that Bethabara was the house at which he made his home while baptizing, and that he selected a position thus contiguous to the River Jordan for the convenient accommodation of the great multitudes of people and their beasts, and that he baptized them *in* the house, *in* the yard, *in* the neighborhood, "*in* the wilderness," or *at*, or *near to*, or *in* the river, as circumstances might render it convenient.

But it is said John baptized "*in* Enon, near to Salim, because there was *much water* there." "Enon" signifies *the fountain of On*—a mere spring, sending forth a rivulet; or probably such springs were numerous in that vicinity; for the words, *ὕδατα πολλὰ*, rendered "much water," mean *many waters*—that is, there were many springs, or rivulets, in that region. This was necessary for the comfort of the multitudes, by whatever mode they may have been baptized. And as "*much water*," or *many waters*, would have been a comfort and convenience sufficient to induce John to select that locality as the theater of his operations, independently of immersion, or even of baptism in any form, surely it must be very inconsequential reasoning to infer from this fact alone that John immersed. So far as the text is concerned, he *may* or *may not* have immersed.

But an overwhelming proof of immersion, in the estimation of Baptists, is found in the record of *our Lord's baptism by John:* "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." Matt. iii. 16.

The whole argument for the immersion of our Saviour in this passage depends upon the meaning of the Greek preposition *ἀπὸ*, here rendered "out of." Now it cannot be denied that the primary meaning of *ἀπὸ* is *from* instead of "out of," and that, in very many instances, it is so translated in the New Testament; thus: "A certain man went down (*ἀπὸ*) *from* Jerusalem." Luke x. 30.

"When he was come down (*ἀπὸ*) *from* the mountain." Matt. viii. 1. Our Saviour *may* have been immersed, for any thing we *certainly know* to the contrary; but nothing can be more fallacious than the attempt to prove it by this passage. "Coming up *from* the water," would be the most literal and natural translation.

But if there was any connection between the baptism of water and the descent of the Holy Ghost immediately following it, *this* would furnish an argument against immersion; for the Saviour was not immersed into the Holy Spirit, but the "Spirit of God" was seen "descending like a dove, and lighting upon him."

3. The *Pentecostal baptism* is the next instance to which we refer.

But here we find a twofold baptism—that of *water*, and that of the *Holy Ghost*. The latter, being not only the first in importance, but, in this instance, the first in occurrence, shall be first considered.

(1) John says of Christ: "He shall baptize you with the *Holy Ghost*, and with fire." Matt. iii. 11. Before his ascension, our Lord said to his apostles: "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Acts i. 5. In the second chapter of The Acts we find the record of this glorious baptism; but by what *mode* was it administered? This is the question now before us.

St. Peter testifies on the occasion, saying: "This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will *pour out of my Spirit* upon all flesh." Again, he adds: "He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." And, in speaking of the descent of the Holy Ghost on that occasion, St. Luke records that "it *sat upon* each of them." In speaking of the baptism of the Holy Ghost at the house of Cornelius, St. Peter says: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost *fell on them, as on us at the beginning*. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." Acts xi. 15, 16. In giving the history of this baptism, St. Luke uses the same form of words: "The Holy Ghost *fell on all them which heard the word*." Acts x. 44.

We here find several forms of speech used expressive of the mode in which baptism was administered: the Holy Ghost "*sat upon them*," it was "*poured out*" upon them, and it "*fell on them*." It is never once intimated that they were *dipped*, *plunged*, or *immersed*, into the Holy Ghost. Indeed, it is certain that this baptism was not by *immersion*, but by *pouring*. This is the united testimony of the Prophet Joel, of St. Luke, and of the Apostle Peter. It is one of the striking exhibitions of the strange power of prejudice in favor of a darling theory,

that any man of common understanding, with these palpable Scripture proofs before his eyes, can have the temerity to stand up and contend that this baptism was administered by immersion. And how passing strange must we view the fact that, after perusing this combination of inspired testimony, setting forth, as explicitly as it is in the power of language to do, that this baptism was performed by *pouring*, some persons without a blush can attempt to argue that "baptism always means *immersion*, and *can mean nothing else!*"

We are apprised of but two methods resorted to by immersionists to ward off the force of the argument we have just presented.

First, an effort is made to prove that the Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Ghost was an immersion, because the "*sound* filled all the house" where the disciples "were sitting;" hence it is argued that, as the *sound* filled the house, and as the disciples were in the house, therefore they were immersed in the sound. This plea is rendered perfectly ridiculous when it is remembered that the disciples were not said to be baptized with the *sound*, but with the *Holy Ghost*. Surely the *sound* was not the *Holy Ghost*. The *sound* filled the house, but the *Holy Ghost* "sat upon" the disciples; hence this effort to prove immersion only exhibits the desperate shifts to which the advocates of an erroneous theory may be driven.

Secondly, failing to prove immersion by an argument founded on the fact that the sound filled the house, the next effort is to set imagination to work to conjure up a kind of figurative immersion. We are told that "the apostles were so entirely overwhelmed and surrounded by the influence of the Holy Ghost, which came so abundantly upon them that it might be called an immersion." Wonderful logic! That is, the *pouring out* of the Spirit was so abundant that it was not *poured* at all; the disciples were dipped, plunged, or immersed into it. The plain truth is that the Scriptures, in so many words, declare that the "baptism of the Holy Ghost" was performed by *pouring*. We may imagine and explain as much as we please, but it would certainly be wiser, as well as more modest, to suspect that our theory may be wrong than flatly to contradict the Bible.

(2) We next notice the Pentecostal baptism of *water*. All we learn of this baptism we derive, first, from the fact that Peter commanded them to "repent and be baptized," connecting therewith the "gift" or baptism "of the Holy Ghost;" secondly, the historian informs us that "they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

It is admitted that there is no *positive* proof here *against* immersion;

but it must also be admitted that there is no proof of any kind whatever *for* it. But we think there are, in the circumstances connected with this baptism, several strong presumptive arguments *against* immersion.

Look at the intimate manner in which water baptism is connected with that of the Holy Ghost—the *one* promised upon the condition of the proper reception of the *other*, and then following it in immediate succession. Remember, farther, how constantly water is used in both Testaments as an emblem of cleansing, or moral purification. Look upon these facts, and who can help believing that the water of baptism is an emblem, or sign, of that moral cleansing effected by the influence of the Holy Ghost? But if water baptism is an emblem of spiritual baptism, would we not, in the absence of proof to the contrary, expect both to be administered in the same mode? That the baptism of the Holy Ghost was not by immersion, but by pouring, is put beyond a doubt; therefore the reasonable conclusion is that water baptism was administered in the same way.

Again, look at the shortness of the time allowed for this baptism, and all the circumstances connected with it, and the probabilities will appear greatly against the mode of immersion. From the third hour of the day, or nine o'clock in the forenoon, to the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon, was all the time that could have been allowed for both the preaching and the baptizing; for three in the afternoon was the settled hour for the regular public prayer. At this the apostles attended, and we may be assured that this great solemnity was not neglected on this occasion. Not more than six hours, then, could have been occupied by the wonderful events recorded in the second chapter of The Acts. Peter preached a long discourse, using "many other words" beside what we have on record. The other apostles also preached to the thronging crowds. Fifteen nations are named, who all heard the gospel, "every man in his own tongue, wherein he was born." After this, time must be allowed for each convert to make his confession to the satisfaction of the apostles; then the believers must be separated from the multitude; the place for immersion must be sought out; permission must be obtained to use that place—pool, pond, river, or whatever it was. Taking all the difficulties of the case into the account (many more than we have taken time to name), is it probable that the apostles could have immersed the "three thousand" in so short a time? or, if they could, is it reasonable to suppose that all the necessary arrangement, preparation, marching to the place of immersion, etc., would occur, and no account be taken of it? And yet we hear not one word

in regard to the immersion, the preparation, the place, or any thing else about it; and why this silence about a matter that must have produced a great commotion? The most rational conclusion is, that no immersion was performed, but that the apostles sprinkled the people, or poured the water, after the manner of Jewish priestly purification, and in the easiest and most convenient method. That these "three thousand" were then and there immersed involves too many improbabilities to be accredited without evidence, but of *that* there is none; hence we conclude that this baptism can furnish us no proof of immersion.

4. The baptism of *the Ethiopian eunuch* has generally been relied on by immersionists as one of their most conclusive proofs on the subject.

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." Acts viii. 36–39.

The evidence here claimed for immersion is based entirely upon the expressions—"they went *down into the water*," and "when they were *come up out of the water*."

If the Greek preposition εἰς, here rendered "into," and ἐκ, rendered "out of," do not imply immersion, it is plain we can find no proof of that mode in this text. It will not be contended that εἰς always means *into*, or that ἐκ always means *out of;* and if such be not their invariable import, it may not be in this case; hence the evidence for immersion founded upon this source cannot be conclusive. As Mr. Watson has observed: "Εἰς is spoken of place, and properly signifies *at*, or it indicates motion toward a certain *limit;* and for any thing that appears to the contrary in the history of the eunuch's baptism, that limit may just as well be placed at the nearest verge of the water as in the middle of it."

That εἰς frequently, in the New Testament as well as elsewhere, means *to* cannot be denied by any candid scholar. Peter is commanded to "*go* (εἰς) *to* the sea, and cast a hook." Matt. xvii. 27. Surely he was not to go *into*, or *under*, the water. Our Lord, it is written, "went up (εἰς) *to* a mountain." Did he go *into* its heart, or *under* it?

But it is only wasting time to delay with criticisms about these Greek prepositions. Allow, for the sake of argument (which is far

from being true), that εἰς always means *into*, and ἐκ *out of*, allow that in the instance before us εἰς can mean nothing but *into*, or even allow that it means *under*, what can the cause of immersion gain by this admission? It would be as destitute of proof as ever. Indeed, if immersionists could prove that the preposition here means *into*, or *under*, in the sense of immersion, they would most effectually overturn their own cause. They would clearly demonstrate that Philip did not baptize the eunuch by immersion. The text reads: "They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch." Now mark, all this was done before the act of baptizing commenced. Whatever the act of baptizing was, it was something neither synonymous nor simultaneous with the "going down *to*, *unto*, or *into*, the water." Now, if "going down *into* the water" implies immersion, then it follows that "both Philip and the eunuch" were already *immersed*, or *under* the water, before the act of baptizing commenced; consequently, if baptism means immersion, they were already baptized—that is, if "going down *into* the water" means immersion, then the eunuch was immersed before he was immersed, which is a contradiction, or immersion is not baptism, which destroys the immersionist's doctrine. The immersionist must either admit that "going down *into* the water" is not immersion, or that immersion is not baptism; for it is certain that the act of baptizing was performed after they had gone "down into the water." Surely it must be plain that, as the baptizing was an act subsequent to the going to the place at which it was performed, neither the method of going to the place nor the character of the place, whether it was in a *house* or in a *river*, in a *wilderness* or in a *city*, in a *palace* or in a *pool*, can determine any thing as to the mode of the baptism. I may *go up into* a house, and then proceed to baptize, either by pouring, sprinkling, or immersion. The fact of my being in the house would not of itself decide the question as to the mode of administration. Even so Philip, with the eunuch, "went down *to*, *unto*, or *into*, the water; and he baptized him." But *how* he performed this act—whether he dipped the water up in his hand or in a cup, and whether he poured or sprinkled it upon him, or whether he immersed him once, twice, or three times, and whether he did it backward or face foremost—these are questions concerning which the text gives us no information.

There are, however, one or two circumstances connected with this transaction which furnish some presumptive evidence *against* immersion. The eunuch, at the time Philip entered the chariot with him, was reading a certain portion of Isaiah's prophecy concerning the Messiah. In connection with the paragraph he was reading are these

words: "So shall he sprinkle many nations," etc. It is said: "Philip began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Now, it is clear Philip must have instructed him concerning the duty of baptism, or he would not have asked it at the hands of Philip; and if so, we can find nothing in the scripture under review so likely to lead to discourse on that subject as the verse referred to, "So shall he *sprinkle* many nations," etc. This passage doubtless depicts the sanctifying grace of the gospel with which the nations were to be blessed, and which is sacramentally symbolized by the baptismal water. But in reference to this subject the prophet does not speak of *immersion*, but of *sprinkling*. If the prophet had used *immerse* instead of *sprinkle*, and written "So shall he *immerse* many nations," how many immersionists would now clap their hands over it as a proof of the eunuch's immersion! But as it is, it furnishes presumption in favor of sprinkling.

Again, the manner in which the eunuch requested baptism is worthy of notice. It is said: "As they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Now the report of all travelers is, that that region of country is exceedingly dry, and that there is no stream to be found in the route more than ankle deep. Connect this fact with the eunuch's exclamation, "See, here is water," or, as it is in the Greek, "Behold, water," and who can help believing that the eunuch had suddenly discovered a spring, or small branch, and with emotion calls the attention of the apostle to the fact, and demands the ordinance of baptism? It is not probable that there was any stream, or pool, there of sufficient depth for immersion, and of course the probabilities here apparent are against that mode.

5. Next, we notice the baptism of *Saul*. This transaction is thus recorded by St. Luke: "And he received sight forthwith, and *arose, and was baptized*." Acts ix. 18. St. Paul, in relating the history of the matter, represents Ananias as coming into his presence and addressing him, saying: "And now why tarriest thou? *Arise and be baptized*, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Now, we venture the assertion that if a hundred unprejudiced persons, who had never heard of any controversy as to the mode of baptism, were, for the first time, shown these scriptures, and asked for a verdict as to the attitude of Saul when he received baptism, every one of them would arise from the perusal and exclaim, "He was *standing* on his feet in his room, where Ananias found him." Circumstantial as the account is, recording the fact of his *rising* to his feet, and then par-

taking of refreshments, and being "strengthened" in his weak condition of body, yet there is not one word of their going to one of "the rivers of Damascus" in search of a place for immersion! Whether he walked, rode, or was carried—whether they traveled one, two, or three miles, or only a few furlongs—whether Saul endured well the fatigue, or fainted by the way—not a hint or syllable about any of these things do we hear! Why this silence? The natural and rational conclusion is, that no such journey was undertaken or thought of. Right on the spot, in the house, where he *arose* and *stood*, *then* and *there* he was baptized. This is the rational conclusion from the New Testament history of the affair. The word *ἀναστάς*, used in both the recitals of the baptism, literally signifies *the act of rising up*, or *standing up*, and, plainly as language can express it, denotes the bodily attitude in which the baptism was received. Hence, if our opinion is to be founded on the Bible account, we must set this down as a case in which the probabilities, amounting almost to positive proof, are against immersion.

6. *Cornelius, and "his kinsmen and near friends,"* in the city of Cesarea, furnish us the next instance of baptism to be considered. The account is related thus: "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." "Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Acts x. 44–48.

We cannot help perceiving a most striking correspondence between this, the first great Gentile baptism, and the Pentecostal baptism of the Jews, already noticed. In the one, St. Peter had opened the gospel kingdom to the Jews; in the other, he opened it to the Gentiles. In both cases the baptism of water and that of the Holy Ghost are so intimately connected as plainly to indicate that there is an important relation between them. In both instances the Holy Ghost was *poured out*, or *fell*, *upon* them. Upon any principle of symbolism, the hypothesis of immersion is inadmissible. The purifying Spirit is poured out, which would expressly indicate the application of purifying water in the same way. But look at the brief history of the case. Peter demands, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" None daring to object, "he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Is there any suggestion to leave the room they occupied? Is there any suggestion about a pool, bath, pond, river, or any thing of the sort? There must be water, for without it there can be no baptism; but is there the slightest hint that there must be water enough to immerse them, else

they cannot be baptized? Is there any hesitation, any delay, any confusion, by reason of a sudden and unforeseen demand on Cornelius for a large and deep body of water? or does not the irresistible impression of the scene indicate a demand for a small portion of water for instant use? Is there any intimation of any spectacle, any procession through the streets of Cesarea—the Roman centurion with near friends, his kindred, his devout soldiers, and his domestic servants, led by Peter and six Jews from Joppa—to a public immersion, all speaking strange tongues, and all Cesarea filled with wonder? Nothing of the sort—nothing that can be tortured into correspondence with any such ideas. They are the growth of other ages—the product of a state of mind far different from that of the apostles of the Lord. However great, perhaps unexpected, may be the issue of this Gentile baptism, it is plainly the will of God that it should be celebrated; and it is done—done *there, then, with* water, not *into* it. (Dr. R. J. Breckinridge.)

All the circumstances of the case seem rationally to preclude the idea of immersion. But when we consider the manifest connection in this case between the baptism of the Holy Ghost and that of water, the one cleansing the soul from the pollutions of sin, and the other symbolizing the same by an application of water, and when we also remember that the mode of this spiritual baptism was *pouring*, not immersion—when we consider *all these things*, the argument against immersion is little short of demonstration.

7. The baptism of the *Philippian jailer* is the last Scripture instance of the ordinance we shall notice. The account of this is recorded in the sixteenth chapter of The Acts.

1. It is important to notice that the jail here consisted of two apartments; for the apostles were "thrust into the *inner* prison;" hence there was an *outer* prison. 2. The jailer's own residence was connected with the prison so closely that from his sleeping chamber he could see when the doors were open into the "inner prison;" for as soon as he awoke he saw that the prison doors were all open. 3. The jailer, springing in with a light, brought the apostles from the *inner* to the *outer* prison. *Here* the apostles preached, here the jailer was converted, and *here*, it seems, the apostle's stripes were washed, and the jailer received baptism.

But the question is, by what mode was this baptism administered? In the absence of all testimony to that effect, it is certainly unreasonable to suppose that in this pagan prison there was any pool or tank ready prepared for immersion. Hence, if there was any immersion in the case, they must have left the prison and gone out in quest of some

river or pond. Some of the presumptions against this supposition may be briefly stated.

1. It is unreasonable to suppose that the jailer, just recovered from his terrible alarm about the supposed escape of his prisoners, could have been induced, so soon afterward, in violation of law, to lead these same prisoners through the city and to the suburbs, or neighborhood, in search of river, pool, or pond, for the administration of an ordinance of which, till that hour, he had never heard.

2. It is unreasonable to suppose that the inspired Paul, who so strictly enjoined upon all to be "subject unto the higher powers," and "to obey magistrates," would have been accessory to so palpable a violation of law as this night-excursion, on the part of the jailer, would have involved.

3. When, in the morning, "the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go," and Paul was informed of the fact, he replied, "They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay, verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out." Nor did the apostles consent to leave the prison till the magistrates came and legally released them. Then "they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia."

Now, we demand, can this conduct of the apostles, amid the light of the morning, be consistent with the supposition that they had already, under the dark cover of midnight, not only left the prison, but wandered off, none can tell how far, in search of a place for immersion? However men may convict themselves of absurdity in defense of a theory, let them beware how they thus involve the holy apostles in hypocrisy and crime! Relying on the Bible statements alone, we conceive it scarcely possible that the jailer was immersed.

III. SCRIPTURE ALLUSIONS TO BAPTISM.

1. That all the dispensations of true religion, the patriarchal and the Mosaic, no less than the Christian, referred to and centered in Christ, and were intended to develop, with more or less distinctness, the Messianic kingdom, cannot be doubted. In the Mosaic economy, where scarce a single ceremony or service was without an important significance in connection with the glorious revealments of the plan of gospel salvation, who can suppose that the constant and habitual use of water and blood was either accidental or unmeaning? For the ratification of the Sinaitic law, half the blood of the sacrificial offerings was sprinkled upon the altar, and the rest upon the people. In the performance of this sprinkling, Moses said, "Behold the blood of the covenant which

the Lord hath made with you." By express statute, the ceremonially unclean Jews were sprinkled with the water of purification. Upon the great day of atonement the high priest sprinkled blood upon the mercy-seat over the ark.

In addition to all this, look at the striking symbolic announcements of the prophets in reference to Messiah's reign. Hear the language of Isaiah: "So shall he sprinkle many nations." Listen to the yet more graphic strain of Ezekiel: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Viewing all these things together, may we not expect to find, under the gospel, something of which they were lively symbols? If the legal purification, under the former dispensation, was manifested by the sprinkling of water upon the people, and the sprinkling of blood upon the altar, how appropriate that, under the gospel, the sanctification of the heart should be procured through the "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," made efficacious by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and that the outward symbol of this should be the baptismal water!

Conformable to the same prominent idea are the teachings of the New Testament. St. Paul says: "Ye are come—to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of *sprinkling*, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Heb. xii. 22, 24.

If, then, all through the law, we find the *sprinkling* of blood and of water so familiarly connected with purification, and, under the gospel, the baptism of water so directly associated with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, how could a Jew, in the absence of direct precept to the contrary, fail to conclude that water baptism was intended to symbolize that moral cleansing which is effected by the affusion of the Holy Ghost and the "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ?" Equally manifest must it be that if the one baptism is constantly represented by sprinkling or pouring, the other should be administered in the same way. There should be a correspondence between the symbol and the substance—the external sign and the internal grace. Admitting that water baptism is administered by affusion, how striking the harmony between the covenant spiritual blessings of redeeming grace and the external ceremony by which they are symbolized! Discard sprinkling and pouring, and institute immersion as the only proper baptism, and how can we fail to perceive that much of the harmony and beauty, symmetry and coherence, of the external forms and internal grace of the gospel system are destroyed, and the types and shadows of the law shorn

of their efficacy and despoiled of their significance as adumbrations of "good things to come"!

2. The next *Scripture allusion* to which we refer is that in which it is contended that baptism is presented as *emblematic of the burial of Christ.*

This has been prominently urged by immersionists as one of their strongholds. The texts referred to are the following:

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead is freed from sin. Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." Rom. vi. 3–8.

The same apostle again says: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; *buried with him in baptism*, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Col. ii. 11, 12.

We have been thus full in our quotations of these texts that the connection may at once be the more distinctly seen; for it is only necessary to observe closely the connection, and the sense will be obvious. The first inquiry here to be made is this: To which does the apostle, in these passages, refer—*water* baptism or *spiritual* baptism? We take the position that so to construe these texts as to make them refer to *water* baptism is one of the most glaring perversions of Scripture of which we can conceive. Such a construction would turn the apostle's beautiful argument and illustration into a perfect medley of nonsense and confusion. That this may be at once apparent, let us inquire what are the specific *effects* of this baptism?

(1) It produces "death"—"buried with him by baptism *into death.*" Now, does *water* baptism produce death? If so, it must be either the death of the *body*, or the death of the *soul* "*unto sin.*" If we say the former, then the body must be *drowned;* if the latter, then *water* will supersede the blood of Christ and the Spirit's influence.

(2) This baptism enables us to "*walk in newness of life.*" "Even so we also should walk in newness of life." Now, we ask, are we enabled thus to walk by *water* baptism? Nay, but by *spiritual* baptism.

(3) This baptism so plants us in "the likeness of Christ's *death*," as to cause us to be in "the likeness of his *resurrection*." Can water baptism do this? Can *it* cause us to *die to sin* as Christ died on the cross, or to lead a *new life* of obedience, resembling our Saviour's resurrection from the tomb to die no more?

(4) This baptism crucifies "our old man" (or carnal nature) "with Christ." Is this the effect of *water* baptism? Who *can* believe it?

(5) This baptism destroys "the *body of sin*." Is this the effect of *water* baptism? Surely it is the "renewing of the Holy Ghost"—spiritual baptism—and not *water*, which can accomplish this work.

(6) This baptism releases us from the *service of sin*. "That henceforth we should not *serve sin*." What but *spiritual* baptism can effect this deliverance?

(7) This baptism produces the *circumcision of the heart*. "Ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands." Now, will any one contend that immersion can *circumcise* or *change* the heart?

(8) This baptism "puts off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;" that is, in this baptism all past sin is pardoned through faith in Christ—not by *water* baptism, but by the influence of the Spirit.

(9) From this baptism we are raised "through the faith of the operation of God;" but from *water* baptism, by the *hands of the minister*.

(10) In this baptism we are "quickened together with (or through) Christ, and we gain the "forgiveness of all our trespasses"—effects which can result only from spiritual baptism.

Let any reflecting mind ponder seriously upon the *effects* here enumerated, compare them with the scriptures quoted, and mark how explicitly it is taught that they all result from the baptism spoken of, and then determine whether or not these are the effects of water baptism. He who can believe that water baptism can effect all this mighty moral and spiritual renovation may dispense with the "blood of atonement" and the "renewing of the Holy Ghost," and trust in the *water alone* as his redeemer and sanctifier. To what perversion of Scripture may the devotees of error be driven!

Nothing can be plainer than the fact that in these passages the apostle was discoursing of the "*burial*" of the "*body of sin*" by the "baptism of the Holy Ghost," and not the *burial of our bodies* in *water baptism*. Of the effects enumerated as resulting from the baptism of which the apostle discourses, not the *first one can* be produced by water baptism, but *every one of them* results from spiritual baptism; hence it is not the former, but the latter (which was by *pouring*), of which it is

written, "We are *buried with him by, or in, baptism.*" And thus this boasted proof of immersion is shown to be imaginary; for it can only appear when Scripture is perverted, and so construed as to do violence to its proper connection and obvious import.

3. When driven from his strongholds, the immersionist, as a last resort, turns upon his opponent and charges him with the error of holding to and practicing *three* baptisms—*sprinkling, pouring,* and *immersion;* while the Bible teaches, "*one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism." Eph. iv. 5. "Now," exclaims the Baptist, "if *immersion* be baptism, then neither *sprinkling* nor *pouring* can be baptism; and if *pouring* be baptism, neither *immersion* nor *sprinkling* can be baptism; and if *sprinkling* be baptism, then neither *immersion* nor *pouring* can be baptism; and he who practices *pouring, sprinkling,* and *immersion,* practices *three* baptisms; whereas the Bible allows but *one.*"

This charge of inconsistency may *seem* plausible, but it is, in reality, perfectly groundless. It is founded upon a perversion of the text referred to. The object of the apostle was not to teach any thing concerning the *mode* of baptism; his object was to inculcate the duty of Christian fellowship and brotherly love. "Keep the *unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*" This is the practical lesson he is enforcing, and he urges it on the ground of a sevenfold unity which pervades the Christian system. His argument is this, because there is "one *body,* one *Spirit,* one *hope,* one *Lord,* one *faith,* one *baptism,* and one *God,*" therefore "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

There is but *one* baptism. Ye have not been baptized in the profession of different religions, nor yet in the name of different Lords. One of you was not baptized in the name of Paul, another in the name of Cephas, and another in the name of Apollos; but all have been baptized in the name of the same Lord—"in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Ye have all this *one baptism;* therefore "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." As to the *mode* of the ordinance, however much we may prefer the one to the others, as the Scriptures have not explicitly prescribed *one* to the exclusion of all others, let each one "have the choice of *sprinkling, pouring,* or *immersion.*"

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XIV.

QUESTION 1. What is the doctrine of the "Methodist Discipline" as to the *mode* of baptism?

2. From what *three* sources is the scriptural argument derived?

3. What is the *Greek word* in the New Testament for baptism?

4. How is it *defined* by lexicographers?

5. Does this settle the controversy?

6. Can it be settled by the etymological argument?

7. Are there any *instances* in the New Testament in which the Greek word for baptism *cannot* mean immersion? and what are they?

8. By what *mode* were "our fathers" baptized unto Moses? and how is it proved?

9. What is the argument for immersion founded on "John's baptism"? and how is it answered?

10. What is the argument for immersion founded on the "baptism of our Lord" by John? and how answered?

11. By what *mode* was the baptism of the "Holy Ghost" administered? and how is this proved?

12. To what two methods have immersionists resorted to ward off the force of this argument?

13. How was the Pentecostal baptism of water probably administered? and how is it proved?

14. What is the argument for immersion founded on the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch? and how is it answered?

15. State the argument in reference to the baptism of Saul.

16. In reference to the baptism of Cornelius and his friends, what is the argument?

17. How were the Philippian jailer and his household probably baptized? and how is this proved?

18. How were Lydia and her household probably baptized? and how is this shown?

19. What argument against immersion is founded on the *symbolic allusions* of the Old Testament?

20 What is the argument for immersion founded on St. Paul's expression, "Buried with Christ *by*, or *in*, baptism"? and how is it answered?

21. What is the *last resort* of the immersionist when driven from his strongholds? and how is his charge of inconsistency against Pedobaptists shown to be groundless?

CHAPTER XV.

THE LORD'S-SUPPER—ITS ORIGIN AND NATURE.

I. ITS ORIGIN.—This we give in Scripture language. The inspired record is found in the following passages, viz.:

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Matt. xxvi. 26–29.

"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them; and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God." Mark xiv. 22–25.

"And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves; for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Luke xxii. 14–20.

The apostolic comment upon this institution is recorded in the following scriptures, viz.:

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion

of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." 1 Cor. xi. 23–28.

II. We next consider the NATURE of this ordinance.

Having presented from the several evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the inspired record of the origin and appointment of this institution by our Lord himself, and from the First Epistle to the Corinthians the apostolic comment upon the same, we have clearly before us the substance of the teachings of Scripture upon the subject.

The *first* question here demanding our attention is this: In what sense should the phrases, "This is my body," and "This is my blood," be understood? The Roman Catholics interpret these words in the most literal acceptation; and contend that, by the prayer of consecration said over the elements by the priest, the *bread* is no longer *bread*, and the *wine* no longer *wine*, but that they have been converted into the *literal* body and blood of Christ; and thus they originate the absurd figment of transubstantiation. But little need be said to evince to the unbiased mind that their position upon this subject is both unreasonable and unscriptural.

1. It is *unreasonable*. It is a maxim of unquestionable truth, both in philosophy and religion, that whatever is palpably repugnant to common sense must be *false*. Now it is clear as any truth can be that the prayer of consecration can effect no change in the physical properties of the bread and the wine. They are still *bread* and *wine*, *literally* and *really* such, as much after the consecration as before it; and chemical analysis may readily demonstrate the fact. If so, they are not *literally* the *body* and the *blood* of Christ; and thus it manifestly appears that transubstantiation is *unreasonable*, because repugnant to the dictates of common sense. Romanists may persuade themselves that they believe it; but really they do not, they *cannot*.

2. Transubstantiation is *unscriptural.*

It is a rule of interpretation, admitted by all sound biblical critics, that no scripture should be interpreted in a manner contradictory to common sense, or plain reason, when obviously susceptible of an interpretation not liable to such objections. That figurative language is frequently used in Scripture, none can dispute; and that *bread* and *wine*, in the phrases under review, were intended by our Saviour as *figures, emblems, symbols*, or *representatives*, of the body and blood of Christ, and not *literally* such, is the plain obvious construction. How could the disciples understand their Lord as teaching them that the *bread* was *literally* his body broken for them, or the wine literally his blood shed for them, when they saw his body yet whole, not nailed to the cross, and his blood not yet flowing from his pierced side? Christ said to his disciples: "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Did they understand him as teaching that *he* was literally but a *grape-vine*, and *they* but *twigs* growing upon that vine? St. Paul says, in reference to the Rock that followed the Israelites in the wilderness, "That *Rock was Christ.*" Was Christ a *literal* rock? The plain interpretation is this: the *rock* was a *type*, or *emblem*, of Christ; the vine, in its relation to the branches, *figuratively represented* the relation of Christ to his disciples; and so the *bread* and the *wine* were *symbols*, or *representatives*, of the body and blood of Christ.

But little better than this error of the Romanists is the doctrine of *consubstantiation*, which teaches that although the bread and the wine are not *literally* the body and blood of Christ, yet that his body and blood are *literally present* with the elements in the Supper, and are *literally* received by the communicants.

Among the leaders of the Lutheran Reformation, some—and Luther himself was one of them—leaned too far toward transubstantiation. They seemed unable to take at once so bold a leap on the subject as to escape entirely the errors of the papists. It is true that consubstantiation, for which they contended, delivered them from the grosser absurdities and the idolatrous tendencies of the system they renounced. They did not place themselves in direct conflict with men's external senses, nor were they led to the idolatrous adoration of the *bread* and the *wine;* but still they leaned too far toward the *literal* interpretation, holding that the communicant did *literally eat* the body and *drink* the blood of Christ, which was always, in a manner inexplicable, present with the elements.

Others, led by Carolostadt and Zuinglius, went to an opposite extreme, attaching no farther import to the words, "This is my body,"

and "This is my blood," than that the elements were merely *signs*, or *figures*, assisting the faith to apprehend the absent body and blood of the Lord. This view is in close correspondence with that of the modern Socinians.

The true scriptural view of the subject, as we conceive, lies between these two extremes, and was advocated by Calvin, and is now the creed of the Protestant Churches generally. While it rejects the *literal* presence of the body and blood of Christ, as held by Luther and the abettors of consubstantiation, it admits with Carolostadt and Zuinglius that the elements are signs, symbols, or figures, of the literal body and blood of Christ. But it goes one step farther. It considers the elements not only as a *sign*, but also as a *seal* of the new covenant. This idea appears to be implied in the words of Christ, "This cup is the *new covenant in my blood*;" and in the words of Paul, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

Hence we conclude that, in this ordinance,

1. No change is effected in the elements; the bread and the wine are not *literally the body and blood of Christ.*

2. The body and blood of Christ are not *literally present with the elements*, and received by the communicants.

3. But the elements are *signs*, or *symbols*, of the body and blood of Christ, serving as a memorial of his sufferings on the cross and a help to the faith of the communicant.

4. The elements also possess a *sacramental* character, being a divinely appointed *seal* of the covenant of redemption. As the blood of the paschal lamb served as a seal of this covenant under the old dispensation, pointing the faith of the Israelite to the coming Redeemer, it was fit that, as the *old* dispensation was now to be superseded by the *new*, the seal of the covenant should be correspondingly changed; hence at the conclusion of the last authorized Passover, the holy supper is instituted, as a *perpetual memorial* and *abiding seal* of the covenanted mercy and grace of God, till the Saviour "shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XV.

QUESTION 1. In what scriptures is the origin of the Lord's-supper set forth?

2. How do the Romanists understand the terms, "This is my body," and "This my blood"?

3. What is the correct interpretation of them?

4. Who advocated *consubstantiation*? and wherein does it differ from *transubstantiation*?

5. How may both these theories be refuted?

6. To what opposite extreme did Zuinglius and his party go?

7. What is the scriptural view of the subject?

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LORD'S-SUPPER—THE RIGHT TO PARTAKE OF IT CONSIDERED.

WE next inquire, *Who have a* RIGHT *to the Supper of the Lord?*

We present it as a Bible position, standing forth prominently to view, that

All real Christians—that is, all who are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus"—have a divine right to membership and communion, embracing full fellowship, with the privilege of the Lord's-supper, in every Church, or congregation of Christians, among whom their lot may be cast.

This proposition will be found to contain the principle according to which the great question of Christian communion now before us may be clearly and satisfactorily settled. Before we bring the proposition to bear directly on the question, and exhibit, in all its important aspects, its connection with the subject of Christian communion, we should weigh the proposition itself in the balances of the sanctuary. We bespeak for it a careful investigation and a fair trial. If it be unsound, let it be at once rejected; but if it be according to the teachings of Heaven and the principles of eternal truth, let us plant ourselves upon it, as on a sure foundation, impregnable and indestructible as the "word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

We now appeal to the Scripture testimony to learn *who* they are that have a right to the fellowship of the Church, to the immunities and privileges of the house of God, to the communion of the Supper of the Lord. If we trace the entire history of the planting of the Church, as laid down in The Acts of the Apostles, we shall find in the apostolic administration but one invariable practice upon the subject. Such as "gladly received the word," such as "believed," not only on the day of Pentecost, but on all subsequent occasions, were without exception and without delay admitted to the communion and fellowship of the Church. This was done too, not on the ground of their perfect agreement in all their views of Christian doctrine, or ordinances, or Church order, but *solely* on the ground of the *fact* that they were sup-

posed to have been made partakers of the spiritual benefits of Christianity "by faith in Christ Jesus."

It is indeed surprising that there should be thought any plausible ground for diversity of sentiment among Christians as to the true basis of Christian communion, after we have looked upon the clear and unmistakable apostolic platform exhibited upon the subject in the fifteenth chapter of The Acts of the Apostles. Here we find the apostles and elders assembled in solemn council to adjudicate upon the very question we are now discussing. *Their decision*, and *the grounds upon which it was based*, are committed to record. This record remains as an imperishable memorial which should never be overlooked—a light to shine upon the pathway of the Church in all succeeding generations.

The history of the case is this: There arose in the Church of Antioch a dissension on the subject of communion. Certain Judaizing teachers from Jerusalem had visited them, and troubled them much with some of their close communion principles. They had taught them that there was a certain rite, ceremony, or ordinance, which many of them had neglected, that was essential to salvation, and of course that such as had hitherto neglected this ought not to be admitted to the communion and fellowship of the Church. Paul and Barnabas opposed strenuously these close communion teachers, and the sectarian and schismatic principles they were inculcating. But still, for a complete and more authoritative settlement of the matter, it was agreed that Paul and Barnabas, and some other disciples, should go up to Jerusalem, and call the apostles and elders together for the decision of the question. We have the record of their *decision*, and the *reasons of it*. Now we invite special attention to the *grounds* of this decision. It was a question of communion and fellowship, identical with the very question now before us. The question was whether certain Gentiles, claiming to be Christians, though they had neglected a certain ceremony which some contended was essential, should be recognized as Christians, and admitted to communion. The decision is in favor of their admission. But what are the *grounds* of that decision? What are the *specific reasons* upon which it is based? We answer, They are precisely the same that are comprised in the proposition we have laid down as the basis of Christian communion, and which we are now endeavoring to establish by Scripture testimony.

It ought to be strictly noted on this subject that we here have an infallible, an inspired touch-stone, or clue, for the settlement of the communion question, whenever, wherever, or however, it may arise; for if these persons, whose right to Church-communion is contested, are admitted to

communion *on certain grounds*, and those grounds are specifically stated, it necessarily follows that in all cases of contested right of communion, whatever may be the ground of the objection, *the same reasons specified in this case would establish a similar right, and require a similar decision.* But what are these reasons? St. Peter, in pleading the right of these Gentiles to communion, declares: "God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us." Here, God is appealed to as a witness for the Gentiles of their claim to communion, on the ground that *he* had "given them the Holy Ghost"—that is, he had conferred on them the spiritual blessings of Christianity—they had received the converting power of the gospel—"even as he did unto us"—that is, they enjoy the same spiritual religion with us; consequently they are entitled to the same Church privileges. But St. Peter goes on: "And put no difference between us and them, *purifying their hearts by faith.*" Here the plain argument of St. Peter is this: these Gentiles are true believers, they are genuine Christians, they are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus;" consequently they have a right to the privileges and fellowship of the Church.

Now, we ask, will not the same argument prove the same thing in all similar cases? If *these* have a right to Church-communion *because* "their hearts are purified by faith," must not all whose "hearts are purified by faith," or all who are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," have a right to Church-communion? *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

St. Peter still proceeds: "Now, therefore, why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Here the argument for their right to communion is grounded upon the fact that all are believed to be heirs of a similar salvation.

After St. Peter had closed his argument, St. Paul and St. Barnabas next spoke on the same side of the question, and using a similar mode of reasoning. They appealed to the fact that God, through their instrumentality, had "wrought miracles and wonders among the Gentiles." In other words, they argued, God has conferred upon the Gentiles the spiritual blessings of Christianity, therefore they have right to the external privileges and ordinances of the Church. Here, let it be remembered, there is not one word about the peculiar notions of these persons concerning doctrines and ordinances, about "baptisms and the laying on of hands"—no, nor about any thing else, but the simple fact

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of their *conversion to God*. *This*, and *this alone*, was *the ground* upon which their right to communion was affirmed. This fact no man dare deny.

If we turn our attention to the Apostolic Epistles, we find frequent reference to the same platform of communion. St. Paul (see 1 Cor. x.), in commenting on the Lord's-supper, says: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are *one bread*, and *one body;* for we are all partakers of that one bread." We subjoin for the better understanding of this passage a few extracts from leading commentators. Dr. Clarke says: "As only the one loaf was used at the Passover, and those who partook of it were considered to be *one religious body*, so we who partake of the eucharistical bread and wine, in commemoration of the sacrificial death of Christ, are one spiritual society, because we are all made partakers of that *one* Christ whose blood was shed for us to make an atonement for our sins, as the blood of the paschal lamb was shed and sprinkled in reference to this of which it was the type. All who join together in celebrating the Lord's-supper, and are partakers of that one bread, give proof by this that they are Christians, and have fellowship with Christ." Whitby paraphrases as follows: "For we being many are one bread, and one body (or, because the bread is one, one loaf being broken for us all, we who partake of it being many are one body, owning ourselves thereby all members of that body of which Christ Jesus is the Head); for we are all partakers of that one bread; and thus you see that by partaking of this Christian sacrifice we own ourselves to have communion with the Lord Jesus, and with the *whole society of Christians*." Macknight paraphrases thus: "The cup of blessing for which we bless, is it not the joint participation of the body of Christ?"

In reference to the passage under review, we may remark that it affords clear evidence, first, that all the disciples of Christ are *one body*, represented by the *one loaf*. Secondly, that all who belong to that *one body*—that is, all Christians, or believers—have a right to partake of that *one* communion. Thirdly, that all who partake of this communion in a proper manner, not only commune with Christ, but with the whole body of Christ, or the entire Christian Church. Fourthly, that all who have communion with Christ, the Head, have a right to communion with his entire body, or with the whole Church of believers; hence we derive from this passage another proof of the correctness of our position. It clearly demonstrates that all Christians have a divine

right to the communion and fellowship of the Christian Church; and this right is based *alone* upon the fact that *they are the children of God.*

In Romans xiv. 1–3, we read as follows: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth; for *God hath received him.*"

On the third verse, Dr. Clarke remarks: "Both, being sincere and upright, and acting in the fear of God, are *received* as *heirs of eternal life*, without any difference on account of these religious scruples or prejudices." Whitby remarks: "'God hath received him'—that is, into communion with him, viz., by giving them that Spirit which is the medium of our union to and communion with him." Here we perceive a clear recognition of the same basis of communion. A question arose in the Church at Rome whether certain professed Christians, who had partaken of meat which had been offered in sacrifice to idols, ought to be admitted to the communion of the Church. St. Paul decides in their favor; but on what *ground* does he render that verdict? He bases it *alone on the ground that "God had received them.*" No allusion is made to ordinances or peculiar notions of doctrine. The *fact* that God recognizes them as his children is presented as the great, the *only, thing required* as an indispensable prerequisite to communion.

In the twelfth chapter of Romans and the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians the Church is represented as "*one body* in Christ," and all the Christians—that is, all who have been "baptized by one Spirit," or "made to drink into one Spirit"—are represented as members of that "one body," and "every one members one of another." It is commanded that there be "no schism in the body." So intimate is the union and communion here inculcated that all the members are required to "have the same care one for another," and mutually to participate in the sufferings and honors of each other. If "one member suffer," all the members are required to "suffer with it;" if "one member be honored," all are required to "rejoice with it." What language could be plainer, or more direct to the point in hand, than the above? The union and communion of all Christians is here enjoined in terms which must imply full fellowship in the closest and the strongest sense of the word.

But again, we ask, what is the *ground* upon which this fellowship is founded? Is it because they harmonize in their views of doctrine, of Church polity, or of external forms and ceremonies? Not one of these things is so much as named. However important, in view of other

considerations, these things may be when the *right* and *obligation* of Church-fellowship are in question, they are not so much as hinted at; but that right and obligation are based *wholly* and *solely* upon the *fact* that they are partakers of the spiritual benefits of religion, that they are Christians, or members of the spiritual body of Christ.

The Scriptures might be quoted much more extensively still in confirmation of the same position, but any farther testimony we deem superfluous. From what has been presented, we persuade ourselves that the candid and impartial will readily perceive that the Scriptures themselves amply sustain the proposition which we have laid down as a basis for the settlement of the great question of Christian communion.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XVI.

QUESTION 1. On the *right* to the Lord's-supper, what general proposition is laid down?

2. What is the argument founded on the fifteenth chapter of The Acts?

3. What other Bible proofs are presented in favor of free communion?

CHAPTER XVII.

OBJECTIONS TO FREE COMMUNION ANSWERED.

1. It is objected that "*the free communion proposed is impracticable because of the diversity of opinion respecting the institution of baptism.*"

The leading principles already established, if duly considered, fully refute this objection; yet the subject will admit of some farther discussion. A large portion of those who hold to immersion as the only valid baptism, contending also that baptism is an indispensable prerequisite to the Lord's-supper, refuse to commune with, or to admit into their Churches, any unimmersed persons. In considering this question we have no need to discuss the *mode* of baptism. However that question may be decided, it cannot affect the subject before us. The question of Christian communion rests on entirely different and distinct grounds. The Bible, as we have shown, places the right and obligations of communion, not on ordinances and ceremonies connected with religion, however important in themselves, but on *the fact of conversion and adoption into the family of God "by faith in Christ Jesus"*—on the *fact* that "God has received them." If it be decreed that all who are within a certain house have a right to partake of a rich banquet provided for all the inmates, how ridiculous it would seem for those within the house to begin to quarrel with each other about the mode of entrance! If it be admitted that the invitation was to all within the house, how utterly absurd would it be, when the table is spread, for some to refuse to partake because others, acknowledged to be *within the house*, had not entered in the manner judged the most proper! To be within the house at the time is the only condition required; and that they have entered by some method is certain from the fact of their presence within. To contend, therefore, either that they are not within the house, or that, although within, they have no right to partake, is alike absurd and ridiculous.

If it be admitted, as we have proved, that it is the duty and privilege of all Christians to commune at the table of their common Lord, how absurd must it be for *some* to refuse to commune with *others* because certain rites connected with their religion are thought to have been not

properly performed! Admit that they are the children of God, and their right to commune is at once settled; deny this, and none can plead for that right.

We may farther argue the right of all Christians to the communion of the Lord's-supper from the *origin* of the institution itself. It was not established by the founder of a sect or party. It originated not with any of the ancient Fathers. It was not set up by any of the Popes or councils of Papal Rome. Neither Martin Luther nor John Calvin, neither Cranmer nor John Knox, neither John Wesley nor Andrew Fuller, nor any other reformer or leader of a party, ever pretended to have originated this institution. They knew their places—they knew the Scriptures better. Hence, we affirm that this is no *sectarian* or *denominational* institution. The very idea of an Episcopalian, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, or a Baptist communion-table, is absurd and monstrous; it is a burlesque upon the institution itself! This holy ordinance claims paternity in no denomination of Christians. It was instituted and ordained by the *one* Christ and Lord, the Saviour of all his people, and for and in behalf of all his followers of every name and order, wherever found or however circumstanced. With what propriety, therefore, can any *one party or denomination* of Christians claim the right to exclude any of God's children from *his own* table? Who gave them that right? Where, in all the book of God, do they find authority for this lofty prerogative? Were it a Presbyterian or a Baptist table—were it a mere *denominational* arrangement—had it originated with a sect or party, the assumption might be less unreasonable; but, as it is, it is perfectly absurd and ridiculous! The scriptures we have adduced, establishing the *right* of all the children of God to the table of the Lord, are abundant and explicit. If they do not establish that point beyond doubt or cavil it will be difficult to place any sensible comment upon them. How, then, we ask, can we admit that any man is a child of God, and yet deny him the privilege of partaking of that one loaf in the Supper? To proceed thus is not to be guided by the Scriptures, but audaciously to push them aside!

Where, we may well inquire, is any divine authority for any man, or set of men, to sit in judgment on the case of others, to determine whether they may be admitted or not to the Lord's-table? The apostolic rule on the subject is, "Let a man examine *himself*, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." 1 Cor. xi. 28. Paul is not to examine Peter; and Peter, John; and John, James, etc.; but Paul, Peter, John, James, and all the rest, must each one *examine himself*. For self-examination, in view of the Lord's-supper, there is express Bible war-

rant; but for brother examining brother, there is *none*. Whoever assumes this prerogative has usurped an authority for which he can show no credentials.

We know that close communionists plead that *baptism is an indispensable prerequisite to the Lord's-supper, and that immersion is essential to baptism*, and that, therefore, they cannot, conscientiously, commune with unimmersed persons.

This plea looks plausible, and if it be sound, it will go far toward vindicating them from the charge of inconsistency with themselves. But when this argument shall be closely examined, it will be found halting on both legs. It is defective in both the premises and conclusion. First, not to moot the *mode* of baptism, which is of no consequence in this controversy, it cannot be *proved* that baptism is an indispensable prerequisite to the Lord's-supper; but were we, for the sake of argument, to admit it, and to admit also that there is no baptism but immersion, it would not *necessarily* follow that no one holding these sentiments could, conscientiously, commune with an unimmersed person It is enough for each to be the keeper of his own conscience.

We shall now endeavor to show the defect in both the premises and conclusion in this argument. *First*, in the *premises*, it has been assumed that baptism is an indispensable prerequisite to communion; but this the Scriptures nowhere expressly teach. This fact the close communionists are compelled to admit. Were it otherwise, they would long since have presented their express Scripture to establish their position. But this, I believe, they have never attempted; but they have relied solely on inference and deduction.

Now, as baptism and the Lord's-supper are both *positive* institutes, and, as Protestants believe, the only divine ordinances of the new institution, it would seem passing strange, judging *a priori*, if there be such a connection between these two ordinances that baptism *must* in all cases precede the Supper, that there should be no express precept to this effect. Such would be an exceedingly loose method of presenting a *positive* institute. The Mosaic law, which was as the shadow to the substance, compared with the gospel, was minute and particular in describing the persons who had right to the privileges of the Jewish temple and altar. But shall we suppose that Christ and his apostles, in setting up and ordering the new—the better—the everlasting dispensation, have left the matter so loosely described that the persons entitled to the immunities of this latter and better house are only to be determined by mere inference?

Again, we think we have amply proved, by express testimony from

Scripture, that all the "children of God by faith" have a right to the communion. Consequently, it would follow, if none but the immersed have a right to the communion, that no others can be the children of God. But this close communionists will not, *dare* not, affirm. By so doing they would unchristianize, and leave to the uncovenanted mercies of God, the entire body of the Pedobaptist Churches—yea, the great mass of the Church of God—for centuries together. At such a conclusion the heart of humanity shudders. Close communionists will not adopt it; therefore the only alternative left them is either to admit that baptism is *not* essential to the communion, or that immersion is *not* essential to baptism. Which will they choose? Will they stoutly set themselves against all the declarations of Scripture showing that all the children of God have a right to the communion? Will they deny that there are any of God's children among the millions who, in the successive ages of the Church, have lived and died—many of them martyrs to the faith—without immersion? Will they give up their cherished idea that immersion *alone* is baptism? or, finally, will they admit that their inference, that baptism is an indispensable prerequisite to communion, has been drawn in haste?

It was a primary and all-important object with our Saviour that all his followers should be united in the most harmonious fellowship. Hence, had *he* considered baptism an indispensable prerequisite to that fellowship, would he not have rendered the subject so plain that no honest and sincere disciple, in any age of the world, could ever so far mistake as to suppose he had been baptized when he had not? Would he not have taken special pains so to define and explain the matter that throughout all coming time "the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein"? We cannot reconcile it with our conceptions of God as a being of infinite wisdom and goodness, that he has left the great mass of his children so much involved in doubt and uncertainty on a subject so vitally important.

The close communionist would infer the correctness of his position—that baptism must precede the Lord's-supper—

(1) First, from the *order* in which these institutions were originally established.

He argues that "baptism was established *prior* to the Lord's-supper, therefore no one should be admitted to the Supper till he has been baptized." Although this plea was set up by the celebrated Booth in his "Apology for the Baptists," we really cannot help considering it too flimsy to merit a serious reply. But lest it might strike others with more force than it does us, we pay it a respectful notice. The rea-

soning is rotten in all its parts. First, the position assumed is false. It is not *true* that the *Christian* baptism was established prior to the Lord's-supper; and if the reference is to any *other* baptism, it is foreign to the subject. It is the *Christian* baptism alone of which we are speaking, and consequently, if any other baptism be referred to in the premises, the argument is the most glaring sophism imaginable. If *one* baptism be referred to in the premises, and *another* in the conclusion, then the argument would run thus: something called baptism originally preceded the Lord's-supper, therefore something else entirely different, also called baptism, should always precede the Lord's-supper. Who does not perceive that there is no connection between the premises and the conclusion? You might as well argue that John *Jones* owes you a shilling, and that therefore John *Smith* owes you a shilling. There is about as much connection between Jones and Smith as there is between the *Christian* baptism and those baptisms that preceded it. They are no more identical than are Jones and Smith.

John's baptism preceded the institution of the Supper, and so did the baptism our Saviour authorized his disciples to perform at the commencement of his ministry. John was a mere harbinger. His ministry preceded the Christian dispensation and passed away. His baptism, and that of the disciples of Christ before his crucifixion, were "unto repentance;" but the *Christian* baptism was "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"—or more briefly, "into the name of Christ."

The Christian baptism was instituted by the Saviour after his resurrection from the dead, in his grand commission to the apostles. (Matt. xxviii. 18–20.) Without delaying to argue so plain a point, we observe that it is only necessary to know that John's disciples were rebaptized when they embraced the gospel, as may be seen from apostolic history, and its *essential* difference from Christian baptism must be admitted. (See Acts xix. 1–5.)

Thus it appears that the argument for the indispensable precedence of baptism to the communion of the Supper, based upon the supposed priority of the former institution, rests entirely on a false assumption. The truth is, the Supper was instituted before the crucifixion, and the Christian baptism not till after the resurrection of Christ. When the institution of the holy Supper was originally founded, the Christian baptism had never been heard of on earth. It only existed in the mind of Him who knew all things. And of all that company to whom the Saviour himself administered the holy Supper, though they were a band of ministers, *not one of them had then received the Christian baptism!*

And yet it is argued that Christian baptism must, in all cases, precede the Supper! Is this following the example of Christ? Is it not inverting the order he established? Is it not subverting the order of things as they came fresh from heaven, and practicing upon a plan directly opposite to the example of him who was the founder of both institutions?

It will occur to the reflecting mind that while the advocates of close communion, could they have shown that baptism preceded the Supper, would thereby have gained nothing to their purpose, yet the establishment of the fact that the Supper preceded the Christian baptism is fatal to the close communion argument. The mere fact that the Christian baptism was instituted before the Supper, had such been the truth of the history would not have proved that baptism in all cases *must* precede the Supper. The order of time in which any two institutions originated will not, of itself, demonstrate that they must necessarily always succeed each other in the same order. It must first be shown that there is a necessary connection between them, either in the nature of things or by divine appointment, rendering that same order always indispensable. On the day of Pentecost the people were exhorted to be baptized, with the promise that they should receive the Holy Ghost. At the house of Cornelius the Holy Ghost first fell on them, and they were afterward baptized. In these two instances the order of events was reversed. But we demand, How is it possible that baptism can be an indispensable prerequisite to the Supper, when, as we have seen, in its first institution under the direct administration of the great Head of the Church, we are furnished with an example in which the Supper preceded Christian baptism? The position that Christian baptism is an indispensable prerequisite to the Supper must be relinquished, or the truth of the gospel history of these institutions must be set aside. Let those concerned choose their own position.

(2) Again, the close communionist appeals to *apostolic precedent* to prove that baptism must always precede the communion. He argues that the apostles never admitted to the communion an unbaptized person, and that, therefore, no others ever should be admitted. To this we reply that it never has been and never can be *proved* that the apostles never admitted to the communion an unbaptized person. The premises in this argument have been assumed without demonstration. We admit with great pleasure that, so far as appears from The Acts of the Apostles, it was their general practice to administer baptism to converts immediately upon their profession of Christianity. But this is as much as can, with certainty, be affirmed. It is nowhere said that this was the

invariable practice. No man can affirm from the Scriptures either that it *was* or that it *was not*. Nor does it matter at all, so far as the present question is concerned, which way that point be decided, or whether it be decided at all. The question now involved is not whether all Christians *should* be baptized immediately on their profession of Christianity or not. This all parties admit and contend for. The point involved in controversy is, whether the neglect of baptism from an honest misunderstanding of the subject necessarily deprives of the *right*, and releases from the *obligation*, of communion. Is there any apostolic precedent deciding *this* point? No such precedent exists. No such case ever occurred, so far as we are informed in Scripture, for apostolic adjudication and decision. Admitting that all to whom the apostles administered the Supper had been baptized, this could not demonstrate that baptism must, in all cases, necessarily precede the Supper without a precept to that effect, unless it could be shown that the circumstances under which the apostles acted would always continue essentially the same. The fact that the apostles performed any given act in a specific way, under certain specific circumstances, will not prove that they would perform it in the same way when those circumstances are essentially changed. Indeed, it is certain they would have varied their conduct to suit the essential change in the circumstances of the case. And if the apostles themselves would have varied their course under an essential change of circumstances, their mode of action in the given case cannot be considered a precedent binding others to the same mode, when those circumstances have essentially changed.

But we ask, Have the circumstances in the case before us essentially changed? Close communionists admit that they have. They admit that in the apostolic day all real Christians were baptized, and that there are many thousands of the most pious and exemplary of the present day who have never (according to the views of close communionists) been baptized at all. If, then, in the apostles' day *all Christians were baptized*, and in the present day they are *not all baptized*, it is most certain that the circumstances have essentially changed; and if so, the apostolic precedent here claimed, if admitted to exist, cannot apply to the case in hand; consequently, the argument from this source is refuted.

It is a very easy matter, however, to show that the apostolic precedent, and that confirmed, too, by express precept, is altogether on the other side. It is certian that the apostles admitted all "believers"—all *true Christians*—to the communion. This none can deny. Close communionists are free to admit it; but it is equally certain that close communionists do not receive all "believers"—all *true Christians—to*

their communion. This they are also free to admit. And hence it necessarily follows that their practice in this particular, and apostolic precedent, sustained too by apostolic precept, are in direct antagonism. They never can be reconciled.

There must of necessity be some *standard*, some *principle*, or *rule*, by which to determine who *ought* and who *ought not* to be admitted to communion. The apostles, it is agreed on all hands, admitted all "believers." The general tenor of Scripture, yea, numerous express passages plainly and explicitly teach that it is the duty of all "believers" to extend fellowship and communion to the entire "household of faith." On the other hand, while it may be conceded that the apostles admitted none but baptized persons to the communion, it is not contended that there is a direct precept teaching that none but *such* should, under any circumstances, be admitted. It is, therefore, most evident that the *standard*, or *rule*, by which the apostles were governed in admitting persons to communion related not to *baptism*, but to *faith*. Their principle was not to admit the *baptized* because and in virtue of their *baptism*, but the *believers* because and in virtue of their *faith*. If they admitted none but *baptized* persons, it was because all the "children of God" were baptized. Their admission or rejection turned not upon the question of their *baptism*, but upon the question of their *adoption* as "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

Again, admitting that the apostles everywhere, both by precept and precedent, enjoined upon all Christians the duty of attendance upon both the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's-supper, by what mode of reasoning do we arrive at the conclusion that a *neglect* of *one* duty releases from the *obligations* of *another?* We are commanded to "search the Scriptures," and "to hear the word of God;" but will any man say that we are to be prohibited from the *one* because we have omitted the *other?* We are commanded to repent, to believe, to seek, to ask, to love God, to love our neighbor, to love our enemies, to visit the sick; but who would argue that a *neglect* of any *one* of these duties releases from the *obligation* of *another?* If it be said that these duties are separate and distinct, having no such connection as necessarily to require that in all cases the *one* should precede the *other*, to this we reply, Let it be *proved* that there is such a connection between baptism and the Lord's-supper that the former is an indispensable prerequisite to the latter, and the dispute is ended. But this can never be shown. Indeed, we are sure there can be no such connection, for *in the very origin of the Supper it preceded Christian baptism.*

(3) Close communionists plead, in justification of their exclusive

practice, that "many of the Churches around them are loose in their discipline and modes of receiving members; and they think it wrong to commune where perhaps they would meet at the table with unworthy persons." The first reply we make to this objection to free communion is this: It is very questionable whether those close communion Churches would have any the advantage in a comparison of membership in view of moral and religious character with most of those Churches whose fellowship they reject. The presumption is, that the "tares and the wheat" would be found growing together in quite as unfavorable proportion among them as among most other denominations. At any rate, it savors too much of that Phariseeism condemned by our Saviour for one denomination, having no just claims to peculiar sanctity, to say to all others: "Stand off, we are holier than you."

But this sensitive dread of meeting at the table of the Lord some unworthy communicant is based entirely upon a false assumption. It seems to grow out of a supposition that a sincere and upright believer, by meeting at the table an unworthy brother, would thereby become contaminated. No position can be more erroneous than this. In approaching the table of the Lord, each Christian goes on his own responsibility. "To his own Master he standeth or falleth." It is his duty to "examine *himself*, and not *his brother;* and if *he* is unworthy, his going to the table of the Lord will avail him nothing. However holy the persons may be with whom he mingles, their righteousness can do him no good. On the other hand, if *he* be worthy, if *he* be sincere and honest, humble and devout, his approach to the table of the Lord will be an acceptable service. However unworthy portions of the communicants may be, their unrighteousness can do him no harm. Did our approach to the table of the Lord involve us in the sins of all the unworthy communicants with whom we may mingle, we might never be able to commune with safety. How can we certainly know, whether we commune at home or abroad, in this or the other Church, that there may not be a deceitful hypocrite at the table? We can have no guarantee for our protection in a single instance upon this supposition.

But look one moment at the arrogance of this position: Afraid to approach the table of the Lord, lest you might meet there an unworthy brother, one whose polluted character might soil the pure white robe of your own spotless righteousness; and yet the immaculate Saviour of the world condescended to commune at the table with Judas Iscariot, knowing him to be a devil! Are you so much better than the Saviour? Is the servant so far above his Lord? Is Christ not too good to "eat the bread and drink the wine" with him who meditated the be-

trayal of his innocent blood, ready most shamefully to barter it for "thirty pieces of silver"? but is a poor sinful worm—one who scarcely dare look up in the presence of that almighty Saviour—too holy to humble himself to commune with his brother?

(4) Close communionists, when driven from every other subterfuge, often try to excuse themselves from communing with other denominations on the ground that *it would offend their brethren.* "We have a Church-rule," say they, "which prohibits us from communing with other denominations; and were we to do so, it might offend many of our brethren." We are persuaded that this plea, though never urged, so far as we know. by ministers, or writers on the subject, is doing more than any other one thing to bolster up the system of close communion. It therefore merits a serious consideration.

The remarks of our Saviour in the eighteenth chapter of St. Matthew on the subject of "offenses" is often relied on by close communionists as furnishing a vindication of their course in refusing to commune with other denominations. Our Saviour says: "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea." This is the principal if not the only text on which they seem to rely as vindicating their conduct. There are two acceptations in which the English word *offense* may be taken. It may mean simply *to wound the feelings* of another, or cause him to feel *sorrowful*, or it may mean to put a *stumbling-block* in his way, so as to *cause him to sin.*

The word *skandala*, here rendered *offenses*, signifies *stumbling-blocks.* The sense is this: whoso putteth a *stumbling-block* in the way of his brother, so as to cause him to *fall into sin*, etc. It is very clear that rendering a brother sorrowful by reproving him for his sins cannot be *offending* him in the sense of the text. Were we thus to construe it, St. Paul would be brought under the malediction; for *he* made the Corinthians *very sorry* with a letter. The only sense which can be put upon the text with consistency is that which we have given above. We may therefore conclude that this scripture was never intended to prevent the Christian from reproving the sins and endeavoring to correct the errors of his brethren, however much it might grieve them, provided he proceed in that gentle manner, and is actuated by that Christian spirit, which the gospel enjoins.

St. Paul reproved St. Peter because he "was to be blamed." Christians are exhorted to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." The great foundation question for the Christian to settle

at the tribunal of his own judgment and conscience is this: What is *true?* what is *right?* This being decided, his line of duty is plain and direct. He must contend for the *truth*, and do what is *right*, leaving the consequences with God.

Now if the close communionist is convinced that all Christians, according to the Bible platform, ought to commune together—if he is satisfied that this is in accordance with the genius of Christianity and well-pleasing to Heaven, he is most sacredly bound to use his utmost influence to promote that object, be the consequences what they may. How *can* he do this, while by his own practice he sanctions the very opposite? It might be a question of prudence whether he should first withdraw from a Church that will not allow him to commune with others before he proceeds to the violation of the rule of that Church; but it can be no question with him whether he should continue to practice upon the close communion principle. He has already decided that the practice is unscriptural.

The declaration of the apostles, when prohibited from preaching in the name of Jesus, now comes home to him with all its force. "We ought to obey God rather than men." Therefore, to such as refuse to commune with other denominations because their Church-rule forbids it, we now say: Will you make void the law of God through the traditions of men? In the great matter of Christian communion, are you prepared to violate your own views of what is *right*, merely to please erring brethren? Is it better to offend the entire "household of faith" (except your own denomination) by doing *wrong*, than to offend a portion of that denomination by doing *right?* Are you so much afraid of offending a few erring brethren, that to avoid it you will do *wrong* yourself, and yet so willing to give offense to all the people of God beside, that you will offend them rather than do *right?* In one word, are you unwilling to offend your brother by doing *right*, and yet willing to offend God, your Saviour, by doing *wrong?*

It is only necessary for the great body of lay members, united with close communion Churches, who have long been convinced of the impropriety of the practice of close communion, led by some noble-minded Robert Hall, to resolve to follow out in practice those principles of free communion which their consciences approve, and a blow will soon be struck that will cause the citadel of bigotry to tremble to its center, and thousands of God's dear children, who have long dwelt in the same land, aliens and strangers to each other, will flow together in the arms of pure Christian fellowship and brotherly love.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XVII.

QUESTION 1. What is the *first* objection to free communion, and how is it answered?

2. How is it proved that baptism is not an indispensable prerequisite to the Lord's-supper?

3 How is it shown that apostolic precedent is against close communionists?

4. What is the plea of close communionists, founded on the discipline of other Churches?

5. How is this plea answered?

6. What is their excuse, founded on their Church-rule?

7. How is it shown to be untenable?

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